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AUTHOR Larson, John C.; Kirshstein, Rita J.
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ABSTRACT

The implementation of the elementary magnet school program in Montgomery County (Maryland) from 1983 through 1985 and the racial balance changes experienced in these schools are discussed. Ten elementary schools in Area 1 and four of seven elementary schools in Area 2 operate magnet programs; these 14 schools comprise the study sample. The objectives of the study were to determine: (1) the extent to which magnet programs have been implemented in the schools as planned; (2) whether these programs stimulated increased participation in the programs through voluntary pupil transfers; (3) whether the resulting pupil transfers improved the racial balance of the schools in the magnet school cluster. School visits were conducted to examine program implementation in 1985. Montgomery County Public School's "Statistical Abstracts" provided data on racial balance in the schools. A distinction is made between school minority composition and racial balance--the difference between the school's and the county's overall minority composition. Magnet programs included gifted and talented programs, and areas of concentration in the arts, mathematics and science, computer literacy, and foreign languages. Magnet programs were generally implemented as planned and did generate transfer requests. The racial balance of Area 2 schools improved to within Board of Education guidelines, although the magnet schools cannot be said to be the sole reason. In Area 1, the racial balance stabilized, but remained above the overall minority composition. The current program does have an impact on the racial balance of magnet clusters. Strategies are discussed for increasing the pace of improvement. Overall demographic trends in the county are described. Findings on racial balance and magnet programs are tabulated and analyzed for each area, and the various alternatives are described. (SLD)

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MONTGOMERY COUNTY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

**A Microscope on
Magnet Schools,
1983 to 1985
Implementation and
Racial Balance**

July 1986

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MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Rockville, Maryland

A MICROSCOPE ON MAGNET SCHOOLS, 1983 TO 1985

Implementation and Racial Balance

by

Dr. John C. Larson
Dr. Rita J. Kirshstein

Steven M. Frankel, Director
Department of Educational
Accountability

Joy A. Frechtling, Director
Division of Instructional
Evaluation and Testing

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A MICROSCOPE ON MAGNET SCHOOLS IN MCPS, 1983 TO 1985 Implementation and Racial Balance

BACKGROUND

MCPS has 14 elementary magnet schools which offer distinctive programs for quality education. The programs have special attractions, some of which are found in no other schools, and others of which offer more intensive educational experiences than similar programs found in the nonmagnet schools. In addition to providing quality education, these programs are also intended to improve the racial balance among schools through attracting and retaining pupils needed for racial balance.

In this report, focusing on the three-year period from 1983 through 1985, we examine the implementation of the magnet school programs, and the racial balance changes experienced by the schools. In a second report, to be issued in the Fall of 1986, we will describe the pupil academic, attitudinal and social outcomes in the magnet schools over the same three-year period.

STUDY METHOD

All 10 of the elementary schools in the Blair High School area (Area 1) have magnet programs, and four of the seven elementary schools in the Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School area (Area 2) operate magnet programs. These 14 schools comprise the sample for this study.

We conducted a series of visits to each of the 14 magnet schools during the Fall of 1985 in order to study the levels of program implementation. Since many of the programs were new or redesigned, the planning memos in early 1983 specified that schools be given at least three years to implement their programs. Thus, we examined implementation levels only in 1985.

The MCPS Statistical Abstracts provided the data concerning racial balance in the schools. We reviewed the data on school minority composition from 1976 through 1985 for the 14 magnet schools and MCPS as a whole. Throughout this report we make the distinction between school minority composition, the percentage of school enrollment which is minority, and school racial balance, the school's distance in percentage points from the MCPS overall minority composition. This distinction is important. High minority schools whose minority compositions move closer to the MCPS average over time become more racially balanced. Even though the school minority composition increases, if the MCPS average minority composition increases faster, then the school becomes more racially balanced. The Board of Education identifies schools in Resolution No. 837-83 as needing possible actions to adjust racial balance when a school's minority composition differs more than 20 percentage points from the school district's minority composition (hereafter called the BOE guideline).

Before reviewing the findings of the study, we summarize below in Table E.1 a brief description of the magnet program features in the 14 magnet schools as observed on the site visits.

TABLE E.1
DESCRIPTION OF MAGNET SCHOOLS AND PROGRAMS

SCHOOL	GRADE LEVELS	PROGRAM FEATURES
AREA 1 MAGNET SCHOOLS:		
East Silver Spring (A)*	K-3	The official magnet features of East Silver Spring include an emphasis on continuous progress which focuses on individual student needs, and math and science instruction in a laboratory setting. Full-day kindergarten is also offered.
Takoma Park (A)	Head Start-3	Takoma Park Elementary School offers a gifted and talented program for children in grades one through three. Other features include differentiated instruction in reading/language arts and mathematics, and Comprehensive School Mathematics Program for able learners.
Piney Branch (A)	4-6	Piney Branch continues the gifted and talented program offered at Takoma Park for students in grades four through six. Specialized instruction in science, math, and computers is also offered.
Forest Knolls	K-6	A communication arts program is the official magnet feature at Forest Knolls. In this program, students participate in a wide range of communication projects, including a school newsletter, a book of students' stories and poems, and a daily radio show.
Highland View (B)	K-6	Highland View offers its students an academy magnet program. Interdisciplinary research is the key to this program, and the math, science, and social studies curricula are coordinated to reinforce one another.
New Hampshire Estates (B)	K-6	The magnet feature at New Hampshire Estates is an interrelated arts program. Full-day kindergarten is also offered.
Montgomery Knolls (C)	K-2	Montgomery Knolls offers students a computer literacy magnet program. Full-day kindergarten is also available.
Pine Crest (C)	3-6	Pine Crest offers a computer literacy magnet program to its students who are in grades three through six. A writing laboratory used by students in grades five and six is a prominent feature of the program.

(continued)

DESCRIPTION OF AREA 1 MAGNET SCHOOLS AND PROGRAMS (continued)

SCHOOL	GRADE LEVELS	PROGRAM FEATURES
Oak View	K-6	Intensive French instruction is the magnet feature of this school. The French Immersion Program teaches children to speak, read, write, and think in French by presenting the MCPS curriculum entirely in that language. A partial immersion program is offered in Spanish.
Rolling Terrace	K-6	Latin instruction in grades 4 through 6 and international education through literature and social studies are the key program elements of this magnet school. Full-day kindergarten is also offered.

AREA 2 MAGNET SCHOOLS:

Rosemary Hills(D) Head Start-2		A gifted and talented program combined with science, math, and computer instruction are the magnet features at Rosemary Hills. Full-day kindergarten is also offered.
Chevy Chase(D)	3-6	This school offers a gifted and talented program together with specialized instruction in math, science, and computers. These magnet features are continued from Rosemary Hills.
North Chevy Chase(D)	3-6	North Chevy Chase also offers a gifted and talented program, as well as science and computer instruction. Students are also given the opportunity to plan their own days in a combination of group instruction and independent study.
Rock Creek Forest	K-6	A Spanish Immersion Program for students in grades 1-6 is the magnet feature at Rock Creek Forest. Spanish instruction for students not in the magnet program and full-day kindergarten are also offered.

 * NOTE: Schools with the same letter after their names participate in the same grade-pairing or a split-articulation plan. In the latter plan some, but not all, pupils in a school may progress to another school for attendance in the upper grades. In a standard grade-pairing scheme, all pupils move from one school to the other between lower and upper elementary grades.

FINDINGS

OVERVIEW

The objectives of this evaluation study were to determine: (1) the extent to which the magnet programs had been implemented in the schools as planned; (2) whether these programs stimulated increased participation in the programs through voluntary pupil transfers; and (3) whether the resulting pupil transfers improved the racial balance of the schools in the magnet cluster. This chain of events, if actually accomplished, represents the magnet concept for improving school racial balance through voluntary means. The findings from this report are summarized below.

- o First, the "second generation" magnet school programs planned in 1983 have, with a few exceptions, been implemented in the schools. Most special program features are in place, and pupil-staff ratios in the magnet schools are generally more favorable than those in the nonmagnet schools.
- o Second, the magnet school programs have generated a greater volume of transfer requests than found in the nonmagnet schools.
- o Third, the racial balance of the Area 2 cluster has improved to a level within the BOE guideline. Several factors contributed to this improvement including community demographic trends, school reassignment policies and the magnet school attractions.
- o Fourth, the racial balance of the Area 1 magnet cluster has stabilized in recent years; however, the minority composition still remains 31 percentage points above the MCPS overall minority composition, which is in excess of the BOE guideline. Details of these findings are summarized below.

IMPLEMENTATION

Program implementation levels. We judged six of the magnet school programs to be fully implemented, and five of these schools had been using the program features in their schools for five to ten years. Three additional programs were found to be close to full implementation in their schools. The remaining five schools needed additional support to reach full implementation. (Four of these schools began their magnet programs within the last three years).

The most frequently cited factor limiting program implementation was lack of classroom space. This is important for two reasons. First, many magnet programs require extra lab space to implement fully their program features for computers, science, math, media or communication arts. Second, while staffing levels in the magnet schools may be adequate, lack of classroom space creates overcrowding despite favorable pupil/adult ratios.

In several schools the need for more equipment was noted. Some schools had not yet acquired all the computers planned for their programs, or the staff were not yet fully trained to use the equipment. These schools have plans to acquire additional equipment and training in the near future.

Staffing levels. Pupil/staff ratios are widely accepted as one indicator of program quality, and the data summarized in Table E.2 suggest that pupils in magnet schools receive more instructional support than do their peers in nonmagnet schools.

TABLE E.2
MAGNET SCHOOLS HAVE MORE FAVORABLE PUPIL PER STAFF
RATIOS THAN DO NONMAGNET SCHOOLS.

		Magnet Schools	Nonmagnet Schools
AREA 1	Pupils/Teacher	22.0:1	25.4:1
	Pupils/Aide	50.0:1	103.0:1
AREA 2	Pupils/Teacher	21.5:1	25.0:1
	Pupils/Aide	44.0:1	106.4:1

SCHOOL APPEAL

Magnet schools have generated a greater volume of transfer requests than found in the nonmagnet schools, as indicated below in Table E.3. Three of the fourteen magnet schools have in-transfer rates in excess of 30 percent of their enrollments, and the in-transfer rate for all magnet schools (23 percent) averages almost twice as high as the average in-transfer rate of Area 1 and Area 2 nonmagnet schools (12 percent). The drawing power of the magnet programs was found to be lowest in the three schools rated lowest on program implementation.

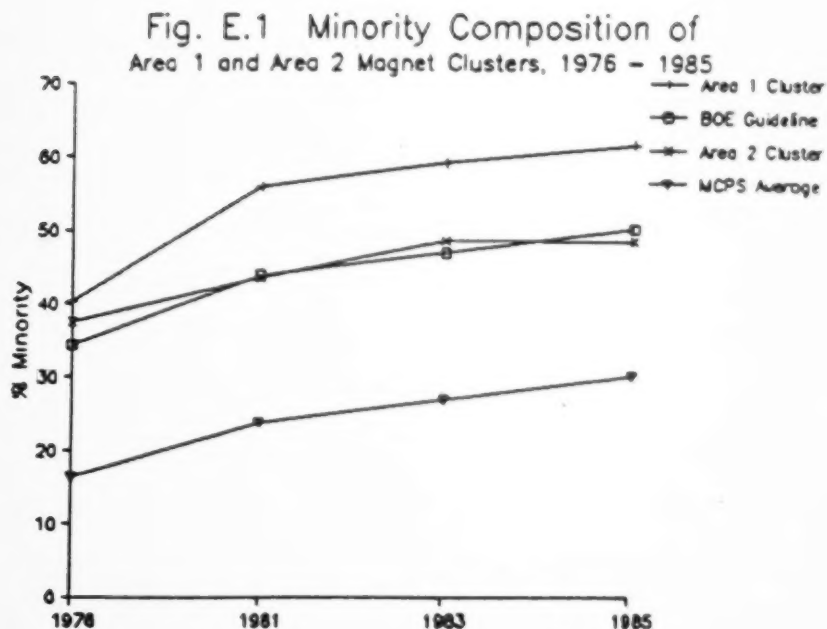
TABLE E.3
MAGNET SCHOOLS GENERALLY ATTRACT MORE PUPILS
THAN DO NONMAGNET SCHOOLS, AS JUDGED BY
PUPIL IN-TRANSFER RATES

		Pupil In-Transfer Rates For Schools:		
		Minimum	Maximum	Average
AREA 1	Magnet	13 %	60 %	24.4 %
	Nonmagnet	2 %	28 %	10.5 %
AREA 2	Magnet	13 %	34 %	20.5 %
	Nonmagnet	3 %	30 %	14.3 %

RACIAL BALANCE

The foregoing findings on the success of magnet program implementation and school drawing power should, according to the magnet school concept, produce improvements in school racial balance. The overall findings on racial balance summarized below indicate that this goal has been met with modest success in Area 2, but that the Area 1 cluster's minority composition, while stable, remains high relative to the MCPS average. Further findings on the voluntary transfer process provide a partial explanation for this result.

Overall Racial Balance of the Magnet Clusters. The racial balance of the magnet clusters has stabilized in recent years. The two magnet clusters now lie on average closer to the district's overall minority composition than they did prior to 1981, as indicated in Figure E.1.

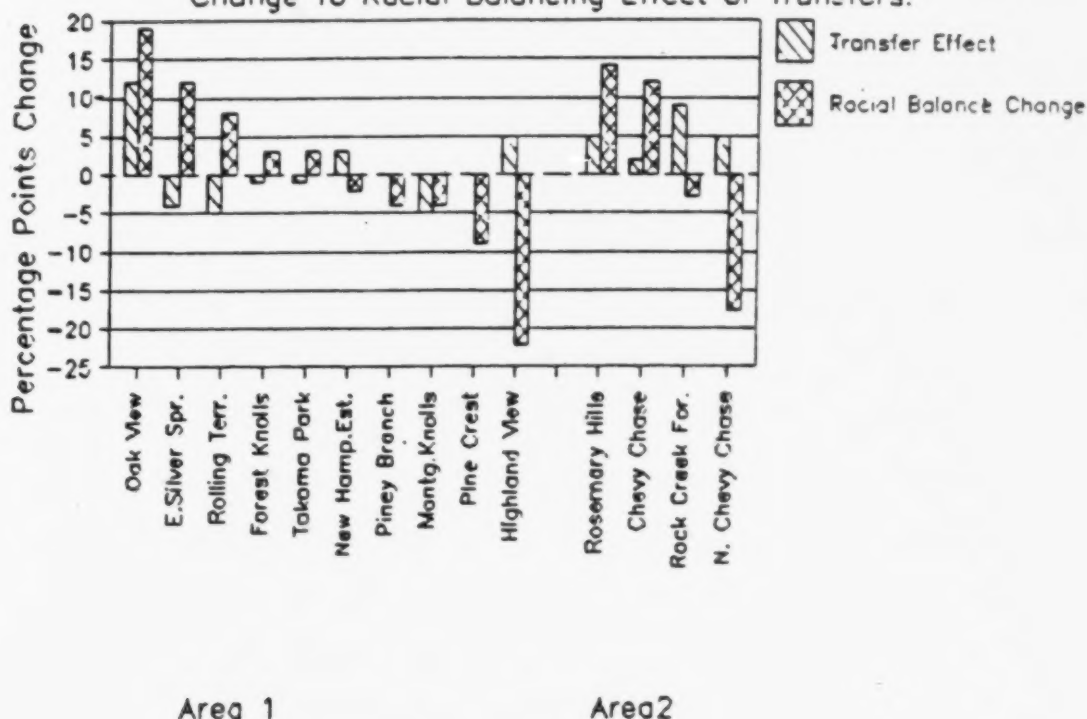


The racial balance of the Area 2 cluster is now less than 20 percentage points above the MCPS average minority composition, or within the BOE guideline for racial balance. Several factors account for this stability including favorable community demographic trends, school assignment policies and voluntary magnet school transfers. In Area 2 the magnet school transfer effect on racial balance was strong enough to push the cluster average within compliance of the BOE guideline.

However, the Area 1 level of racial balance, while stable, remains 31 percentage points above the MCPS overall minority composition, a level in excess of the BOE guideline. Gains in racial balance in some schools were offset by losses in racial balance in other schools. The following findings from the analysis of pupil transfers explain this phenomenon.

Pupil Transfers and Racial Balance. The volume of pupil transfers among the magnet schools indicates active participation in the magnet programs. These transfers are playing a small but important role in the racial balancing of the Area 2 schools. However, they have little overall effect on the racial balancing of the Area 1 cluster. In Figure E.2 we compare the overall change in each school's racial balance over a four-year period to the amount of racial balancing caused by the schools' current pupil transfers.

Fig. E.2 Comparing 1981-1985 Racial Balance
Change To Racial Balancing Effect of Transfers.



In Figure E.2 each school has two bars. One indicates how many percentage points the overall racial balance of the school changed between 1981 and 1985, and the other indicates how many percentage points of racial balance are due to the pupil transfers of the school. A positive change in racial balance indicates that the school has improved, or drawn closer to the MCPS average minority composition over the four years. A positive "transfer effect" means that if all the school's transfers were cancelled, the school would become more racially imbalanced. If the magnet school concept is working as intended, we expect to see schools with positive transfer effects also having improvements in their racial balance because of those transfers. However, this does not always happen.

Several results are apparent from Figure E.2. First, in both Area 1 and Area 2 racial balance improves in some schools and worsens in others. For Area 1 the overall effect across schools produces very little change in racial balance. For Area 2 we have already seen that the overall change is slightly positive.

Second, the size of the transfer effect on racial balance is generally small compared to the overall racial balance change. School assignment policies and demographic changes had a much larger effect on school racial balance than did voluntary transfers. On the other hand, an additional magnet school effect, which may have influenced these data but cannot be measured directly, is the retention in magnet schools of majority group pupils who might have transferred out had it not been for the quality school programs.

Third, transfer effects in the Area 1 elementary magnet schools go against racial balance about as often as they contribute to racial balance while in Area 2 the transfer effects on school racial balance are consistently positive.

All of this means that the third component of the magnet schools concept (voluntary transfers improving school racial balance) is working modestly but effectively in Area 2 but not in the Area 1 cluster. A further examination of the transfer process below explains why.

The Pupil Transfer Process. We rated each pupil transfer request (over the last two years) for its effect on school racial balance. For example, a majority group request to a school higher in minority composition than the sending school contributes to racial balance between the two schools. Or, a minority request to transfer to a higher minority school detracts from racial balance. If the sending and receiving schools were within two percentage points of each other in minority composition, then we rated the effect of transfers as neutral for racial balance. The small percentage of transfers into and out from private schools are not included in this summary. Table E.4 on the following page tallies the results of these ratings for Area 1 and Area 2 transfer requests.

Several conditions are apparent from Table E.4. First, for the initial transfer requests as submitted by parents, about as many would, if approved, detract from school racial balance as would support racial balance. This condition was generally the same for majority and minority group pupils.

Second, the administrative approvals and denials of transfer requests produce very little change to this condition. This is so because the final approval

rate for transfer requests is very high in both Area 1 and Area 2. The Transfer Review Committee approved 80 percent of the Area 1 and 71 percent of the Area 2 requests. Of the requests denied at the Transfer Review Committee and subsequently appealed by parents, the Central Administration approved 71 percent of the Area 1 and 89 percent of the Area 2 appeals.

TABLE E.4
VOLUNTARY PUPIL TRANSFERS PRODUCE LITTLE OVERALL EFFECT
ON THE RACIAL BALANCE OF THE MAGNET CLUSTERS.

Effect on Racial Balance	Initial Request		Final Decision	
	Area 1	Area 2	Area 1	Area 2
Supportive of:	37 %	41 %	40 %	42 %
Neutral to:	22 %	28 %	22 %	28 %
Counter to:	41 %	31 %	38 %	30 %

Third, this pattern is more true of Area 1 than of Area 2 for one important reason, the direction of the transfer movement. Since the magnet programs are located in high minority schools, the transfers which yield the most improvement to racial balance are the in-bound majority group transfers. Since the Area 2 cluster is smaller than the Area 1 cluster and situated closer to a group of low-minority schools, the in-bound majority group transfers are more frequent than in Area 1. For example, in Area 1, 53 percent of the transfers are within-cluster and only 33 percent are in-bound to the cluster while in Area 2, only 20 percent of the transfers are within-cluster and 55 percent are in-bound to the cluster. This pattern of transfers explains why the Area 2 cluster experienced a small overall improvement to racial balance due to pupil transfers.

ALTERNATIVE STRATEGIES FOR MAGNET SCHOOL PLANNING

The foregoing findings indicate that the magnet school programs have, with a few exceptions, been implemented, and that these programs have stimulated a significant volume of voluntary pupil transfers. These pupil transfers, when combined with favorable demographic trends and school assignment policies in Area 2, produced improvements in the school racial balance. Thus, the current magnet school plan will likely maintain or slowly improve the racial balance of the magnet clusters as programs become fully implemented.

However, if a faster pace of improvement in school racial balance is desired, several modifications to the existing magnet school plan may be considered. The findings on the transfer request process and its effects on racial balance suggest several alternative strategies for increasing the drawing power of given schools, or increasing the majority group in-transfer rate, or increasing the racial balancing efficiency of the transfer request pool. The scope of these strategies is confined to the current set of magnet schools, and does not explore potential school additions or deletions from the magnet clusters, or alternative cluster designs.

STRATEGY 1:

CONTINUE AS IS, WORKING TOWARD FULL PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION.

- Description:** Continue support of existing programs in the current schools with special attention given to schools in which the programs are not fully implemented.
- Enabling Conditions:** None beyond what is now planned or already being done.
- Advantages:** Recent demographic trends indicate a slowdown in the rate of minority composition increases. In this context, the full implementation of the current plan may produce more positive racial balancing effects.
- Also, only minimal increases in costs will be needed to ensure full magnet program implementation; and, "no more change" in school programs and school attendance patterns for the near future will contribute to staff and parent satisfaction.
- Disadvantages:** The main disadvantage to this alternative is that racial balance improvements are likely to be slower than may be expected from other options. With the current transfer policy unchanged, the new transfers which help racial balance are likely to be neutralized by other transfers detrimental to racial balance.
-

STRATEGY 2:

MAINTAIN PROGRAMS AND ENFORCE TRANSFER REGULATIONS MORE STRICTLY.

- Description:** Operate the same magnet programs and continue moving toward full implementation, but significantly reduce the number of transfer approvals which do not promote racial balance. Thus, under this alternative school racial balance would be given a higher priority in the transfer regulation procedures. The current MCPS policy on pupil transfers identifies three conditions to be considered for transfer requests: school overcrowding; school underutilization; racial and socioeconomic balance. And, the parent information brochure on transfers notes these conditions. However, the findings in this report indicate that about 39 percent of the administrative decisions on magnet school transfers run counter to the need for racial balance.

Enabling Conditions: None beyond current conditions, except more strict application of MCPS Regulation JEE-RA.

Advantages: The major advantage to this approach, as with alternative (1), is that no additional resources are needed except for those required to produce full program implementation, and stability of school programs and school attendance zones should contribute to staff and parent satisfaction. However, with increased scrutiny of transfers, the movement toward better racial balance should accelerate significantly.

Disadvantages: As more and more transfer requests are denied, more appeals, together with the associated administrative procedures, are likely. It is also possible that, given the need for majority group transfers to achieve racial balance, minority group parents may object to a potential lack of access to the magnet programs. If too many transfers are denied for these reasons, then the number of transfer requests may decline.

STRATEGY 3:

CONTINUE REVISING THE MAGNET PROGRAMS IN SCHOOLS WITH LOW DRAWING POWER TO DATE.

Description: In the magnet schools which have not been able to attract significant numbers of transfers of the desired race groups, consider adding program features with proven drawing power (such as daycare) or replacing the present programs with those which have demonstrated appeal.

Enabling Conditions: Funds for new program starts.

Advantages: This option promotes free choice on the part of parents, makes attractive programs available to a wider range of students, and optimizes the drawing power of the programs in the present schools.

Disadvantages: This option requires additional costs for planning and startup of new programs, and a likely delay of two to three years for full program implementation. Also, existing school programs are disrupted, and some programs may be cut short before their full drawing power has been established.

STRATEGY 4:

EXPAND CURRENT MAGNET SCHOOL RECRUITMENT EFFORTS, TARGETING NONCLUSTER MAJORITY STUDENTS

- Description:** Majority group in-transfers from noncluster schools represent a large potential pool of students needed to improve the racial balance of the schools. To increase the majority group transfer rate into the cluster, recruit them more aggressively, and make minor accommodations should they be required.
- Enabling Conditions:** Since many of the high minority schools also have high utilization rates, it may be necessary for the currently planned expansions of certain schools to be completed before this alternative can be widely used. Funds for transportation will also have to be provided from the noncluster school areas.
- Advantages:** This option minimizes negative reactions and appeals from denied transfer requests. Also, participation in quality programs is increased. The majority group movement from low minority to high minority schools improves the racial balance of both types of schools.
- Disadvantages:** This option requires increased transportation costs. In addition, some schools near to the cluster, which are the most readily available source of majority group pupils, may experience racial imbalance from the majority group out-transfers. Also, some small schools may experience more underutilization as majority group pupils transfer into the magnet schools.
-

Each of the foregoing strategies has potential for improving racial balance in the magnet clusters. While some of these options are new, others are extensions or expansions of existing practices. They vary in their costs, their potential for racial balancing, their potential reactivity with the community and the speed with which they can be expected to produce effects. These alternatives need not be considered in isolation. Rather, some combination of these strategies or others not yet envisioned may produce the most suitable programs for enhancing racial balance in the schools.

A MICROSCOPE ON MAGNET SCHOOLS IN MCPS, 1983 TO 1985

Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION	
Purpose of This Study	1-1
Study Method	1-1
Organization of This Report	1-2
2. BACKGROUND	
Demographic Trends in Montgomery County	2-1
Remedies for Racial Imbalance	2-1
Magnet Schools in MCPS	2-2
3. MAGNET PROGRAMS IN AREA 1	
Magnet Schools and Their Programs	3-1
School by School Findings	3-3
Summary of Implementation Findings	3-26
Summary of Racial Balance Findings	3-30
The Transfer Request Process and Racial Balance	3-36
4. MAGNET PROGRAMS IN AREA 2	
Magnet Schools and Their Programs	4-1
School by School Findings	4-3
Summary of Implementation Findings	4-12
Summary of Racial Balance Findings	4-14
The Transfer Request Process and Racial Balance	4-18
5. ALTERNATIVE STRATEGIES FOR MAGNET SCHOOL PLANNING	5-1

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY

MCPS has 14 elementary magnet schools which offer distinctive quality programs for integrated education. The programs have special attractions, some of which are found in no other school, and others of which offer more intensive educational experiences than similar programs found in the nonmagnet schools. In addition to providing quality education, these programs are also intended to improve the racial balance among schools through attracting and retaining majority or minority group pupils as needed for racial balance.

In this report, focusing on the three-year period from 1983 through 1985, we examine the implementation of the magnet school programs, and the racial balance changes experienced by the schools. In a second report, to be issued in the Fall of 1986, we will describe the pupil academic, attitudinal and social outcomes in the magnet schools over the same three-year period.

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We conducted a series of visits to each of the 14 magnet schools during the Fall of 1985 in order to study the levels of program implementation. Since many of the programs were new or redesigned, the planning memos in early 1983 specified that schools be given at least three years to implement their programs. Thus, we examined implementation levels only in 1985.

The MCPS Statistical Abstracts provided the data concerning racial balance in the schools. We reviewed the data on school minority composition from 1976 through 1985 for the 14 magnet schools and MCPS as a whole. Throughout this report we make the distinction between school minority composition, the percentage of school enrollment which is minority, and school racial balance, the school's distance in percentage points from the MCPS overall minority composition. This distinction is important.

Racial balance is a relative term reflecting how evenly minority and majority group pupils are spread across schools. If a school's minority composition increases, and the MCPS average increases by just the same amount, racial balance - the percentage point-spread - remains unaffected. If a school's minority composition draws closer over time to the MCPS average, then, regardless of how that average shifts, the school's racial balance improves. Racial balance decreases when a school draws farther away from the school district average minority percentage over time. The U.S. Office of Civil Rights uses a guideline for school districts whereby schools which vary more than 20 percentage points from their school district's overall minority composition are considered racially isolated or in need of racial balancing. The MCPS Board of Education also uses this criterion, hereafter referred to as the BOE guideline, to identify schools which may be in need of racial balance

remedies. (Board of Education Resolution No. 837-83)

Pupil transfer requests are the final source of information for this report. Voluntary pupil transfers, stimulated by quality program attractions, are the active ingredient through which magnet schools influence school racial balance. Yet, they are not the only factor acting to change a school's racial balance. Demographic trends in the community and school administrative actions on attendance zones also play a role. In order to understand how much the voluntary transfer process contributes to school racial balance and why such effects come about, we examined the administrative records of all pupil transfer requests involving magnet schools over the three-year period from 1983 through 1985. Using these data together with computer records of pupils' designated neighborhood schools and actual schools of enrollment, we make the distinction in this report between the school's overall racial balance change over a period of time, and the "transfer effect" on school racial balance. The transfer effect identifies how much the voluntary transfers currently in effect help the school's 1985 racial balance.

ORGANIZATION OF THIS REPORT

In this report we discuss first the overall demographic trends in Montgomery County which gave rise to the interest in magnet schools and racial balance, and the several racial balance remedies employed thus far in MCPS. We then present the findings separately for the magnet schools in Area 1 and Area 2. Each of those two chapters contains an overview of the schools and programs, a more detailed description for each school of its magnet program features, and the school's figures on pupil transfers and racial balance. Following each Area chapter, we summarize the area's implementation findings and racial balance changes. We conclude with a chapter on various alternatives for magnet school planning suggested by the results of this study.

CHAPTER 2

BACKGROUND

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY

In the decade between 1973 and 1983, MCPS experienced a 28 percent decline in overall student enrollments. This precipitous drop in the student population prompted many school closings during that period. However, the overall numbers mask the dramatically changing minority composition of the MCPS population. During that decade the majority group enrollments dropped 41 percent while the minority group enrollments rose 86 percent. The result was that the MCPS minority composition increased from 10.5 percent in 1973 to 26.9 percent in 1983.

An earlier report on the MCPS magnet schools* in 1981 concluded that the majority group decline was not so-called "white flight" from this area. Rather, it was due to a drop in birth rate among the majority group so that children progressing through the school system were not replaced by similar children so fast as in the past. At the same time, new housing opportunities for minority families had opened up in Montgomery County during the late 1960's, and the area became an increasing attraction for minority families throughout the 1970's. That earlier report also noted that the average household size for minority families was greater than for majority families. These broad demographic trends generally account for the rise in minority composition of MCPS, and they motivated the interest in racially balancing the MCPS schools with magnet programs as early as 1976.

REMEDIES FOR RACIAL IMBALANCE

School districts nationwide have used a variety of remedies to redress racial imbalance among schools. Mandatory busing, an often unpopular remedy, involves busing pupils across nearby school zones to attend more distant schools. This procedure is not used in MCPS. It has been used in school districts whose minority composition was generally higher and racial imbalance much greater than those conditions in MCPS, where such strong measures appear unwarranted.

Pupil reassignment among geographically contiguous schools is a more limited remedy, since busing distances are kept to a minimum. Pupil reassignments are accomplished either by altering attendance areas or by grade-pairing plans whereby two or more schools share the same student population. Typically, the lower grades attend one school and the upper grades attend another. The conditions are mandatory for the pupils involved, but long distance busing is avoided and the neighborhood school concept is generally kept intact. MCPS has used such procedures in the past and continues to do so in several school areas.

* Takoma Park Magnet School Evaluation: Part II, Final Report. Department of Educational Accountability, MCPS, February 1981.

The magnet school concept is the most favored approach and has increased in popularity nationwide over recent years. Pupil transfers among schools are entirely voluntary. And, as inducement for such transfers, the schools implement programs with distinctive quality features which retain or attract pupils as a magnet, thus the term "magnet schools." Transportation across school zones occurs only by parental choice. And, a special program feature chosen by the parents awaits the child at the end of the bus ride. In MCPS free transportation is provided for pupils with approved magnet school transfers, although this feature is not common to all school districts. Under ideal conditions the volume of transfers and the inter-school directions of minority and majority group movements produce a racial balancing effect in the "free market" of programs among the schools involved. However, in reality, some regulation of the voluntary transfers may be needed to ensure the racial balancing efficiency of the pupil movements.

MAGNET SCHOOLS IN MCPS

In 1976 MCPS began operating magnet programs in some Area 1 elementary schools as a means for enhancing school program quality and improving the racial balance among the schools. A report on the effectiveness of this program was published in 1981, and a "second generation" of magnet schools was initiated in 1983. The second magnet school plan continued the magnet features in many schools, and reassigned or developed new magnet programs in other schools. In addition to the 10 magnet schools in Area 1, magnet program features were begun in four schools in Area 2. Seven of the 10 Area 1 schools are involved in various grade-pairing plans, and three of the four Area 2 schools are in a grade-pairing plan. These schools and their programs are described below in the following two chapters.

Several differences between the Area 1 and Area 2 clusters in their demography and location are important for the racial balancing potential of the magnet plan.

First, the Area 2 cluster is smaller than the Area 1 cluster. Thus transfers among schools are easier because of reduced distances.

Second, the Area 2 cluster is located closer to low-minority areas than is the Area 1 cluster. Thus, potential majority group in-transfers are more readily available. Furthermore, findings from national evaluations on magnet schools suggest that schools located close to "border areas" between minority and majority communities show the greatest improvements in racial balancing gains.

Third, the overall minority group composition of Area 2 is lower than that in Area 1. Thus, less racial balancing is required.

Finally, the minority group enrollment increases in both areas, about three to four percent per year between 1976 and 1983, were generally similar to that countywide. However, the majority group enrollment in the Area 2 cluster rose during that seven-year period about one percent per year while county-wide and in Area 1 the majority enrollments continued declining at about four to five percent per year.

These factors of cluster size, cluster location and local demographic trends influence the racial balancing potential of the magnet school programs, as will be seen from the findings in this report. We return to these issues in the concluding chapter where we explore various alternatives for planning future magnet school designs.

CHAPTER 3

MAGNET PROGRAMS IN AREA 1

In this chapter we provide a synopsis of each of the magnet programs in the Area 1 schools, together with a statistical summary and commentary on each school's implementation status, recent pupil transfers, and racial balance history. We conclude this chapter with a summary and interpretation of the overall Area 1 findings on program implementation and racial balance in the schools.

Our findings indicate that the magnet programs in the Area 1 schools are, for the most part, well-implemented. Their implementation has improved in the last two years, and current plans for renovations in two of the schools in this area should help the implementation of programs housed in those schools. Furthermore, staffing ratios in the magnet schools are better than they are in the nonmagnet schools in Area 1.

Parents have responded favorably to the programs in these magnet schools as indicated by the volume of transfers into these schools. Both minority and majority students are participating. In addition, racial balance has stabilized in the last four years in this cluster.

However, most of the schools in the Area 1 cluster still remain over the BOE guideline. While several schools show racial balance improvements specifically due to magnet school transfers, other schools experienced increased racial imbalance from transfers. Thus, voluntary transfers have generated much participation in the magnet programs, but they have not yet improved the overall racial balance in the cluster.

MAGNET SCHOOLS AND THEIR PROGRAMS

Before reviewing the statistical summaries and program findings for each school, we summarize below in Table 3.1 a brief description of each school's magnet program features. These descriptions were obtained from our site visits to each school. Similar information is provided in a brochure to parents distributed by the Area 1 Office through the schools. Schools with the same letter after their names in Table 3.1 participate in the same grade-pairing or a split-articulation plan. In the latter plan some, but not all, pupils in a school may progress to another school for attendance in the upper grades. In a standard grade-pairing scheme, all pupils move from one school to the other between lower and upper elementary grades.

TABLE 3.1
DESCRIPTION OF AREA 1 MAGNET SCHOOLS AND PROGRAMS

SCHOOL	GRADE LEVELS	PROGRAM FEATURES
East Silver Spring (A)	K-3	The official magnet features of East Silver Spring include an emphasis on continuous progress which focuses on individual student needs, and math and science instruction in a laboratory setting. Full-day kindergarten is also offered.
Takoma Park (A)	Head Start-3	Takoma Park Elementary School offers a gifted and talented program for children in grades one through three. Other features include differentiated instruction in reading/language arts and mathematics, and Comprehensive School Mathematics Program for able learners.
Piney Branch (A)	4-6	Piney Branch continues the gifted and talented program offered at Takoma Park for students in grades four through six. Specialized instruction in science, math, and computers is also offered.
Forest Knolls	K-6	A communication arts program is the official magnet feature at Forest Knolls. In this program, students participate in a wide range of communication projects, including: a school newsletter, a book of students' stories and poems, and a daily radio show.
Highland View (B)	K-6	Highland View offers its students an academy magnet program. Interdisciplinary research is the key to this program, and the math, science, and social studies curricula are coordinated to reinforce one another.
New Hampshire Estates (B)	K-6	The magnet feature at New Hampshire Estates is an interrelated arts program. Full-day kindergarten is also offered.
Montgomery Knolls (C)	K-2	Montgomery Knolls offers students a computer literacy magnet program. Full-day kindergarten is also available.
Pine Crest (C)	3-6	Pine Crest also offers a computer literacy magnet program to its students who are in grades three through six. A writing laboratory used by students in grades five and six is a prominent feature of the program.

(continued)

TABLE 3.1 (Continued)
DESCRIPTION OF AREA 1 MAGNET SCHOOLS AND PROGRAMS

SCHOOL	GRADE LEVELS	PROGRAM FEATURES
Oak View	K-6	French and Spanish are the magnet features of this school. The French Immersion Program teaches children to speak, read, write, and think in French by presenting the MCPS curriculum in that language. A partial immersion program is offered in Spanish.
Rolling Terrace	K-6	Latin instruction in grades 4 through 6 and international education through literature and social studies are the key program elements of this magnet school. One section of full-day kindergarten is also offered.

SCHOOL BY SCHOOL FINDINGS

The statistical summaries and commentaries enclosed in this section contain the data examined for each school. The program commentary summarizes the salient points of the program implementation derived from observations on site visits and subsequent phone conversations with principals. These comments contain a description of each school's designated magnet features as well as notes on other features which contribute to the school's overall appeal.

In addition we describe each school's ten-year racial balance history compared to the magnet cluster and MCPS, and the recent change in overall racial balance between 1981 and 1985.

Each school's pupil transfer activity over the past three years is summarized, as well as the effect of all transfers on the school's 1985 minority composition. Note that the totals from the three-year transfer activity do not directly determine the effects of transfers on the 1985 school minority composition. For example, to anticipate the results briefly, in East Silver Spring the three-year total of transfer activity suggests essentially no change in school minority composition while the "transfer effect" on 1985 composition indicates a slight increase in 1985 minority composition due to the effect of transfers. Or again, in North Chevy Chase the three-year tally of transfers suggests an increase in minority composition whereas the transfers now in effect at the school act to lower the school's 1985 minority composition. These discrepancies are more apparent than real because the three-year tallies may contain the same children transferring more than once, and also they contain pupils transferred in earlier years who no longer attended the schools as of 1985. The details of these data are described below in a sample table with explanatory notes.

EXPLANATION OF INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL DESCRIPTIONS

DESIGNATED MAGNET FEATURES:

MINORITY COMPOSITION AND SCHOOL UTILIZATION: 1976-1985						ESTIMATED EFFECT OF TRANSFERS ON 1985 MINORITY COMPOSITION	
		1976	1981	1983	1985		% MINORITY CHANGE, 1981-1985
PERCENT	THE SCHOOL	A	A	A	A		D
MINORITY	CLUSTER AVERAGE	B	B	B	B		D
	MCPS AVERAGE	C	C	C	C	D	
ENROLLMENT		E	E	E	E	////////////////////	
UTILIZATION		F	F	F	F	////////////////////	

TRANSFER AND PRIVATE SCHOOL ENTRIES AND WITHDRAWALS						
		TRANSFERS INTO (SCHOOL NAME)			TRANSFERS OUT OF (SCHOOL NAME)	
		MINORITY	MAJORITY	TOTAL	MINORITY	MAJORITY
		# Requests	H	H	L	L
1983-84	% Approved	I	I		M	M
	(# Approved)	J	J		N	N
	# Private	K	K		O	O
		# Requests				
1984-85	% Approved					
	(# Approved)					
	# Private					
		# Requests				
1985-86	% Approved					
	(# Approved)					
	# Private					
		# Requests				
TOTAL	% Approved					
	(# Approved)					
	# Private*					

*Data on private school entries and withdrawals are available for the 1983-84 and 1984-85 school years only. Race data are not available.

EXPLANATION OF INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL DESCRIPTIONS

MINORITY COMPOSITION AND SCHOOL UTILIZATION: 1976-1985

- A: The percentage of minority students in the school for the given year.
- B: The percentage of minority students in the cluster as a whole. (For Area 2, the percentage given is for the magnet schools within the Bethesda-Chevy Chase cluster since all elementary schools in that cluster are not magnets.)
- C: The percentage of minority students in all Montgomery County schools.
- D: The change in the minority percentage between 1981 and 1985.
- E: The enrollment in the school for the given year.
- F: The ratio of student enrollment to the school's capacity. It should be noted that some of the schools were renovated and enlarged between 1976 and 1985. Thus, the capacity is not necessarily a constant across time.

ESTIMATED EFFECT OF TRANSFERS ON 1985 MINORITY COMPOSITION

- G: The school's 1985 minority composition is compared to what its composition would be if all pupil transfers were cancelled. The difference between the two percentages is called the "transfer effect" on school racial balance. A (+) number indicates that transfers now in place push up the minority composition. A (-) number indicates that current transfers decrease the school's minority composition. (About 3.7 percent of the pupils were excluded from this analysis due to missing address data.)

TRANSFER AND PRIVATE SCHOOL ENTRIES AND WITHDRAWALS

- H: The number of requests received to transfer into the school. These data are presented separately for white and minority students and for the 1983-84, 1984-85 and 1985-86 school years.
- I: The percentage of requests to transfer into the school that were approved.
- J: The number of requests to transfer into the school that were approved.
- K: The number of transfers into the school from private schools during the 1983 and 1984 school years.
- L: The number of requests received to transfer out of the school. These data are also presented separately for white and minority students and for the 1983-84, 1984-85 and 1985-86 school years.
- M: The percentage of requests to transfer out that were approved.
- N: The number of requests to transfer out of the school that were approved.
- O: The number of transfers out of the school to private schools during the 1983 and 1984 school years.

EAST SILVER SPRING

DESIGNATED MAGNET FEATURES: Continuous progress magnet; math and science lab instruction; full-day Kindergarten

MINORITY COMPOSITION AND SCHOOL UTILIZATION: 1976-1985

		1976	1981	1983	1985	% MINORITY CHANGE, 1981-1985	ESTIMATED EFFECT OF TRANSFERS ON 1985 MINORITY COMPOSITION
PERCENT MINORITY	EAST SILVER SPRING	28.6%	55.5%	57.2%	49.5%	-6.8%	
	CLUSTER AVERAGE	40.3%	55.9%	59.1%	61.5%	+5.6%	
	INCPS AVERAGE	16.4%	23.8%	26.9%	30.1%	+6.3%	
ENROLLMENT		252	265	271	325	////////////////	
UTILIZATION		51.4%	54.1%	64.8%	52.7%	////////////////	

TRANSFER AND PRIVATE SCHOOL ENTRIES AND WITHDRAWALS

		TRANSFERS INTO EAST SILVER SPRING			TRANSFERS OUT OF EAST SILVER SPRING		
		MINORITY	MAJORITY	TOTAL	MINORITY	MAJORITY	TOTAL
1983-84	# Requests	21	16	37	17	40	57
	% Approved	71%	100%	86%	88%	53%	63%
	(# Approved)	(15)	(16)	(31)	(15)	(21)	(36)
	# Private	--	--	3	--	--	21
1984-85	# Requests	14	23	37	9	26	35
	% Approved	64%	100%	86%	100%	88%	91%
	(# Approved)	(9)	(23)	(32)	(9)	(23)	(32)
	# Private	--	--	5	--	--	9
1985-86	# Requests	13	25	38	14	22	36
	% Approved	46%	84%	71%	64%	86%	78%
	(# Approved)	(6)	(21)	(27)	(9)	(19)	(28)
	# Private	--	--	--	--	--	--
TOTAL	# Requests	48	64	112	40	88	128
	% Approved	63%	94%	80%	83%	72%	75%
	(# Approved)	(30)	(60)	(90)	(33)	(63)	(96)
	# Private	--	--	8	--	--	30

*Data on private school entries and withdrawals are available for the 1983-84 and 1984-85 school years only. Race data are not available.

EAST SILVER SPRING

THE PROGRAM

The magnet program at East Silver Spring has several components. Emphasizing continuous progress in reading and math, teachers regularly evaluate students and reassign them to different groups, even if these groups are in other grades and classrooms. Complementing this continuous progress element is a Highly Able Reader Program (HARP). Students identified for this program meet with the Media Specialist weekly to work on higher order intellectual skills.

Math and science instruction in a laboratory-like setting are also magnet features at East Silver Spring. The continuous progress emphasis, coupled with the HARP program and math and science labs, create a gifted and talented type program for advanced students even though East Silver Spring is not an officially designated gifted/talented school.

A wide variety of after school activities are also an attraction. Clubs offering instruction in Spanish, Modern Dance, Folk Dance, Science, and Word Processing, to name a few, attracted 225 of the 330 students at East Silver Spring in the 1985-1986 school year.

East Silver Spring serves students in kindergarten through grade three and offers full-day kindergarten.

MAGNET APPEAL

In the last three years, 112 students requested to transfer into East Silver Spring. Approximately 25 percent of the current student body consists of students who have transferred into the school from schools outside the school's boundaries. East Silver Spring ranks third among the ten elementary schools in the Blair cluster on both numbers of requests to transfer in and the proportion of its student body who have transferred into the school. Eight students entered East Silver Spring from private schools in 1983 and 1984.

The relatively large number of requests to transfer into East Silver Spring is coupled with a fairly large number of requests to transfer out. There were a similar number of requests to transfer in and out for both minority and majority students. Thirty students left East Silver Spring to attend private schools during the 1983 and 1984 school years.

TRANSFER REQUESTS

Of the 240 requests to transfer either into or out of East Silver Spring in the past three years, 78 percent were approved. Majority students requesting to transfer into the school were more likely to be approved than minorities while minority students requesting to transfer out were more likely to be approved than majorities.

UTILIZATION

The utilization rate for East Silver Spring indicates that the school is about half full.

RACIAL BALANCE

The minority percentage dropped six points between 1981 and 1985 to 49.5 percent, placing East Silver Spring within the Board of Education guideline for the first time in many years. The "estimated effect of transfers" shows that the 1985 minority composition would be even lower (four points) if all current transfers into or out of East Silver Spring were cancelled.

FOREST KNOLLS

DESIGNATED MAGNET FEATURES: Communication Arts Magnet

MINORITY COMPOSITION AND SCHOOL UTILIZATION: 1976-1985

		1976	1981	1983	1985	% MINORITY CHANGE, 1981-1985	ESTIMATED EFFECT OF TRANSFERS ON 1985 MINORITY COMPOSITION
PERCENT MINORITY	FOREST KNOLLS	17.3%	23.6%	30.0%	33.3%	9.7%	
	CLUSTER AVERAGE	40.3%	55.9%	59.1%	61.5%	5.6%	
	MCPS AVERAGE	16.4%	23.8%	26.9%	30.1%	6.3%	
ENROLLMENT		371	267	352	341	////////////////////	
UTILIZATION		46.4%	31.3%	53.7%	62.1%	////////////////////	

TRANSFER AND PRIVATE SCHOOL ENTRIES AND WITHDRAWALS

		TRANSFERS INTO FOREST KNOLLS			TRANSFERS OUT OF FOREST KNOLLS		
		MINORITY	MAJORITY	TOTAL	MINORITY	MAJORITY	TOTAL
1983-84	# Requests	5	11	14	7	27	34
	% Approved (# Approved)	100% (5)	91% (10)	94% (15)	86% (6)	74% (20)	76% (26)
	# Private	--	--	10	--	--	17
1984-85	# Requests	5	28	33	6	23	29
	% Approved (# Approved)	100% (5)	89% (25)	91% (30)	100% (6)	91% (21)	93% (27)
	# Private	--	--	12	--	--	5
1985-86	# Requests	7	23	30	6	17	23
	% Approved (# Approved)	57% (4)	78% (18)	73% (22)	50% (3)	94% (16)	83% (19)
	# Private	--	--	--	--	--	--
TOTAL	# Requests	17	62	79	19	67	86
	% Approved (# Approved)	82% (14)	85% (53)	85% (67)	79% (15)	85% (57)	84% (72)
	# Private*	--	--	22	--	--	22

*Data on private school entries and withdrawals are available for the 1983-84 and 1984-85 school years only. Race data are not available.

FOREST KNOLLS

THE PROGRAM

The hallmark of the Forest Knolls Communication Arts program is pupil participation in all aspects of communication. Students create many productions such as a school newsletter, books of stories and poems, a daily radio show, puppet shows, and slide-tape presentations, and they use computer graphics and word processors as tools in their work. The magnet program is for all pupils in the school including a significant number of orthopedically handicapped pupils.

The magnet coordinator helps teachers to blend their subjects into interdisciplinary media productions. For example, a folk tale from another culture in social studies class serves as reading material in English class. And, pupils prepare a shadow puppet production of the tale, and study light and shadows in science class. The curriculum also fosters values such as self confidence through participation, respect for one's own and other's work, tolerance for diversity of abilities and honesty through craftsmanship in detail of their media productions.

MAGNET APPEAL

Seventy-nine students requested to transfer into Forest Knolls in the past three years and 86 students requested to transfer out. Currently 23 percent of its present enrollment consists of students who transferred into the school from other MCPS schools. Forest Knolls ranks fifth among the ten elementary magnet schools in the Blair cluster in its percentage of students who transferred into the school. Requests made by majority students to transfer out of Forest Knolls dropped somewhat in the past three years.

Between 1983 and 1985, 14 minority requests to enter Forest Knolls and 15 requests to leave were approved. For majority students, 53 requests to enter the school and 57 requests to leave were approved.

Twenty-two students entered Forest Knolls from private schools during the 1983 and 1984 school years and the same number withdrew to attend private schools during this time period.

TRANSFER REQUESTS

Eighty-four percent of all transfer requests into and out of Forest Knolls in the last three years were approved. Similar proportions of requests were approved for majority and minority students. There were also no differences in the approval rates for requests to attend Forest Knolls and requests to leave the school. The approval rate for transfers into the school decreased in the last three years for both white and minority students.

UTILIZATION

The school utilization rate almost doubled between 1981 and 1985 to a current 62 percent. Adequate space exists for more in-transfers.

RACIAL BALANCE

Forest Knolls has the lowest minority composition of the Blair cluster schools. At 33 percent minority, the school falls well within the Board of Education guideline, despite an almost ten percentage point increase in minority enrollment since 1981. Transfers now in effect for Forest Knolls have little impact on the minority composition of the school for 1985.

HIGHLAND VIEW

DESIGNATED MAGNET FEATURES: Academy Magnet

MINORITY COMPOSITION AND SCHOOL UTILIZATION: 1976-1985

		1976	1981	1983	1985	% MINORITY CHANGE, 1981-1985	
PERCENT	HIGHLAND VIEW	20.5%	30.5%	47.4%	58.7%	+28.2%	ESTIMATED EFFECT OF TRANSFERS ON 1985 MINORITY COMPOSITION
MINORITY	CLUSTER AVERAGE	40.3%	55.9%	59.1%	61.5%	+5.6%	
	INCPS AVERAGE	16.4%	23.8%	26.9%	30.1%	+6.3%	
ENROLLMENT		439	339	426	420	////////////////	
UTILIZATION		93.4%	80.2%	98.3%	97.7%	////////////////	

TRANSFER AND PRIVATE SCHOOL ENTRIES AND WITHDRAWALS

		TRANSFERS INTO HIGHLAND VIEW			TRANSFERS OUT OF HIGHLAND VIEW		
		MINORITY	MAJORITY	TOTAL	MINORITY	MAJORITY	TOTAL
	# Requests	14	23	37	17	14	31
1983-84	% Approved	64%	52%	57%	82%	93%	87%
	(# Approved)	(9)	(12)	(21)	(14)	(13)	(27)
	# Private	--	--	8	--	--	16
	# Requests	17	20	37	20	16	36
1984-85	% Approved	100%	95%	97%	90%	100%	94%
	(# Approved)	(17)	(19)	(36)	(18)	(16)	(34)
	# Private	--	--	16	--	--	12
	# Requests	20	12	32	14	14	28
1985-86	% Approved	75%	83%	78%	100%	93%	96%
	(# Approved)	(15)	(10)	(25)	(14)	(13)	(27)
	# Private	--	--	--	--	--	--
	# Requests	51	55	106	51	44	95
TOTAL	% Approved	80%	75%	77%	90%	95%	93%
	(# Approved)	(41)	(41)	(82)	(46)	(42)	(88)
	# Private	--	--	24	--	--	28

*Data on private school entries and withdrawals are available for the 1983-84 and 1984-85 school years only. Race data are not available.

HIGHLAND VIEW

THE PROGRAM

The Academy Magnet Program, now in its first year of implementation, emphasizes interdisciplinary instruction and research for all pupils. Three interdisciplinary teachers, one each in math, science and social studies, meet regularly with teachers to plan interdisciplinary instruction, to coordinate school-wide programs, and to develop curriculum materials for interdisciplinary research. This approach produces greater coherence in the curriculum and thereby fosters higher-order thinking in the students. By coordinating their teaching and planning with classroom teachers, these interdisciplinary teachers effectively reduce classroom sizes in the academic subjects. Writing skills are stressed for everyone from kindergarteners to ESOL students to sixth graders.

Other features of the Academy Program include a widely enforced pupil behavioral code, a recent addition of 1,000 volumes to the library, labs for math, science and social studies, and a variety of extracurricular activities focused on pupil academic performance.

MAGNET APPEAL

In the past three years, 106 students requested to transfer into Highland View. Highland View has the second highest proportion of in-transfer students (30 percent) of any of the magnet schools in Area 1. Twenty-four students entered the school from private schools during the 1983 and 1984 school years.

Ninety five students requested to transfer out of Highland View to other MCPS schools between the 1983 and the 1985 school years and 28 students left the school to attend private schools in 1983 and 1984. Overall, there was little difference in the total numbers of requests approved to transfer in or out for both minority and majority students.

TRANSFER REQUESTS

Eighty-five percent of all transfer requests into and out of Highland View in the last three years were approved. Similar proportions of minority and majority requests were approved. Almost all out-transfer requests (93 percent) have been approved over the last three years; however, the approval rate for in-transfers dropped from 97 percent to 78 percent in the last two years.

UTILIZATION

The utilization rate of 98 percent is high, and four portable classrooms were added this year to accommodate enrollment growth.

RACIAL BALANCE

The percentage of minority students at Highland View has increased dramatically in the past four years because of a grade-pairing plan which brings in many minority students from New Hampshire Estates. At the same time, the voluntary transfers to the school help to decrease the minority percentage in 1985 by five points. Thus, the magnet attractions and transfer decisions offset to some extent the minority composition increases from the grade-pairing.

MONTGOMERY KNOLLS

DESIGNATED MAGNET FEATURES: Computer literacy magnet with full-day kindergarten

MINORITY COMPOSITION AND SCHOOL UTILIZATION: 1976-1985

		1976	1981	1983	1985	% MINORITY CHANGE, 1981-1985	
PERCENT MINORITY	MONTGOMERY KNOLLS	34.4%	54.8%	54.8%	64.8%	+10.0%	ESTIMATED EFFECT OF TRANSFERS ON 1985 MINORITY COMPOSITION
	CLUSTER AVERAGE	40.3%	55.9%	59.1%	61.5%	+5.6%	
	MCPS AVERAGE	16.4%	23.8%	26.9%	30.1%	+6.3%	+5%
ENROLLMENT		253	219	252	317	////////////////	
UTILIZATION		68.4%	59.2%	90.8%	113.2%	////////////////	

TRANSFER AND PRIVATE SCHOOL ENTRIES AND WITHDRAWALS

		TRANSFERS INTO MONTGOMERY KNOLLS			TRANSFERS OUT OF MONTGOMERY KNOLLS		
		MINORITY	MAJORITY	TOTAL	MINORITY	MAJORITY	TOTAL
	# Requests	22	21	43	3	14	17
1983-84	% Approved	22%	29%	26%	100%	100%	100%
	(# Approved)	(5)	(6)	(11)	(3)	(14)	(17)
	# Private	--	--	9	--	--	6
	# Requests	16	12	28	13	21	34
1984-85	% Approved	81%	83%	82%	100%	90%	94%
	(# Approved)	(13)	(10)	(23)	(13)	(19)	(32)
	# Private	--	--	6	--	--	16
	# Requests	18	11	29	13	19	32
1985-86	% Approved	50%	82%	62%	77%	68%	72%
	(# Approved)	(9)	(9)	(18)	(10)	(13)	(23)
	# Private	--	--	--	--	--	--
	# Requests	56	44	100	29	54	83
TOTAL	% Approved	48%	57%	52%	90%	85%	87%
	(# Approved)	(27)	(25)	(52)	(26)	(46)	(72)
	# Private	--	--	15	--	--	38

*Data on private school entries and withdrawals are available for the 1983-84 and 1984-85 school years only. Race data are not available.

MONTGOMERY KNOLLS

THE PROGRAM

Montgomery Knolls is a computer literacy magnet for students in kindergarten through grade two. The school is paired with Pine Crest whose computer magnet serves students in grades three through six. Many changes occurred in the program during the 1985-86 school year due to the arrival of a new principal. Computers and computer instruction found their way into the classrooms at Montgomery Knolls and efforts are being made to coordinate the program with that at Pine Crest.

Computers at Montgomery Knolls are used largely for "drill and practice" exercises, keyboard skills, and application skills such as science experiments and word processing. The program is designed to make young children computer literate. Every classroom has a computer and teachers sometimes borrow from other teachers when extra machines are needed. This program has operated in its present form for less than a year and more changes are expected.

Montgomery Knolls also offers full-day kindergarten which appears to be an attraction. At the beginning of the 1985-1986 school year, Montgomery Knolls added a fifth kindergarten class to accommodate the large enrollment.

MAGNET APPEAL

Between 1983 and 1985, 100 students requested to transfer into Montgomery Knolls. Currently, 14 percent of the student body at Montgomery Knolls consists of students who transferred in from other schools. The school ranks ninth among the ten elementary schools in the Blair cluster in the percentage of its student body who are transfers. Fifteen students entered Montgomery Knolls during the 1983 and 1984 school years from private schools.

While a similar number of requests from minority students to enter and to leave Montgomery Knolls were approved for the three year period, more requests from majority students to leave were approved than requests to enter. Montgomery Knolls also lost more students to private schools than it gained.

TRANSFER REQUESTS

Sixty-eight percent of all transfer requests into and out of Montgomery Knolls were approved in the past three years. Similar percentages of majority and minority requests were approved but a much higher percentage of requests to transfer out (87 percent) were approved than requests to transfer in (52 percent). The somewhat low approval rate for majority students transferring into the school and the high approval rate for minorities transferring out work against racial balance. The approval rates for students transferring in and out dropped in the last year.

UTILIZATION

Montgomery Knolls is over capacity for the 1985-86 school year. The unexpected kindergarten enrollment undoubtedly contributed to this.

RACIAL BALANCE

The percentage of minority students at Montgomery Knolls has increased considerably in the past three years. For the first time, Montgomery Knolls exceeded the Blair cluster average in its minority percentage in the 1985-1986 school year. If there had been no transfers into or out of Montgomery Knolls in the last three years, the minority percentage in 1985 would be five points lower than it is in the current school year.

NEW HAMPSHIRE ESTATES

DESIGNATED MAGNET FEATURES: Interrelated arts magnet with full-day Kindergarten

MINORITY COMPOSITION AND SCHOOL UTILIZATION: 1976-1985

		1976	1981	1983	1985	% MINORITY CHANGE, 1981-1985	ESTIMATED EFFECT OF TRANSFERS ON 1985 MINORITY COMPOSITION
PERCENT MINORITY	IN. HAMP. ESTATES	80.9%	82.1%	84.2%	92.2%	+10.1%	
	CLUSTER AVERAGE	40.3%	55.9%	59.1%	61.5%	+5.6%	
	IMCPS AVERAGE	16.4%	23.8%	26.9%	30.1%	+6.3%	
ENROLLMENT		225	268	268	282	////////////////	
UTILIZATION		88.2%	105.1%	119.1%	128.2%	////////////////	

TRANSFER AND PRIVATE SCHOOL ENTRIES AND WITHDRAWALS

		NEW HAMPSHIRE ESTATES			NEW HAMPSHIRE ESTATES		
		MINORITY	MAJORITY	TOTAL	MINORITY	MAJORITY	TOTAL
1983-84	# Requests	12	15	27	15	7	22
	% Approved (# Approved)	75% (9)	93% (14)	85% (23)	87% (13)	57% (4)	77% (17)
	# Private	--	--	1	--	--	2
1984-85	# Requests	25	3	28	13	3	16
	% Approved (# Approved)	88% (22)	100% (3)	89% (25)	100% (13)	100% (3)	100% (16)
	# Private	--	--	2	--	--	2
1985-86	# Requests	18	4	22	17	1	18
	% Approved (# Approved)	61% (11)	100% (4)	68% (15)	76% (13)	100% (1)	78% (14)
	# Private	--	--	--	--	--	--
TOTAL	# Requests	55	22	77	45	11	56
	% Approved (# Approved)	76% (42)	95% (21)	82% (63)	87% (39)	73% (8)	84% (47)
	# Private	--	--	3	--	--	4

*Data on private school entries and withdrawals are available for the 1983-84 and 1984-85 school years only. Race data are not available.

NEW HAMPSHIRE ESTATES

THE PROGRAM

New Hampshire Estates houses an interrelated arts magnet program. A full-time person coordinates the program and all teachers are trained in interrelated arts. The program uses the arts -- visual, movement, music, dance, and drama -- to reinforce and extend the regular curriculum. All students meet biweekly with the curriculum coordinator and all teachers use the approach in their classes.

The program, however, has been overshadowed by some of the problems affecting the school. New Hampshire Estates is overcrowded and in need of repair. (It is scheduled for renovation during the 1986-1987 school year.) It has the highest minority composition of any elementary school in Montgomery County and has found itself a popular press subject.

Beginning in the fall of 1986, New Hampshire Estates will be paired with Oak View. Both schools will offer a reading/language arts program and students in kindergarten through grade 3 will attend New Hampshire Estates while students in grades 4 through 6 in the reading/language arts magnet will go to Oak View.

New Hampshire Estates serves students in kindergarten through grade three and offers full-day kindergarten.

MAGNET APPEAL

Seventy-seven students requested to transfer into New Hampshire Estates in the last three years. Of the current student body, 13 percent of the students transferred into the school. This is the smallest percentage of transfer students in any of the magnet schools in Area 1. Only three students entered the school from private schools during the 1983 and 1984 school years.

Fewer requests to transfer out of New Hampshire Estates were received than requests to transfer in. Between 1983 and 1985, 56 students requested to leave and 4 students left to attend private schools during 1983 and 1984.

Forty-two requests from minority students to transfer into New Hampshire Estates were approved between 1983 and 1985 and 39 requests from minority students to leave were approved. Twenty-one requests from majority students to enter the school and 8 requests from white students to leave were approved.

TRANSFER REQUESTS

Eighty-three percent of all transfer requests into and out of New Hampshire Estates were approved. While it was easier for majority students to transfer in and minority students to transfer out, approval rates for all transfer requests were relatively high.

UTILIZATION

For the past five years, New Hampshire Estates has been well over capacity. With a capacity of 220 and an enrollment of 282, the school is currently quite crowded.

RACIAL BALANCE

New Hampshire Estates has the highest percentage of minority students of any school in Montgomery County. And its minority percentage has continued to increase over the past five years. Yet, transfers to and from the school served to decrease the 1985 minority composition by three percentage points over what it would have been had there been no transfers.

OAK VIEW

DESIGNATED MAGNET FEATURES: Multilanguage Program Magnet

MINORITY COMPOSITION AND SCHOOL UTILIZATION: 1976-1985

	1976	1981	1983	1985	% MINORITY CHANGE, 1981-1985	
PERCENT MINORITY						
OAKVIEW	38.2%	43.1%	44.6%	40.7%	-22.4%	ESTIMATED EFFECT OF TRANSFERS ON 1985 MINORITY COMPOSITION
CLUSTER AVERAGE	40.3%	55.9%	59.1%	61.3%	+5.6%	
MCPS AVERAGE	16.4%	23.8%	26.9%	30.1%	+6.3%	-12%
ENROLLMENT	377	320	372	396	//////////	
UTILIZATION	75.4%	64.0%	74.4%	76.2%	//////////	

TRANSFER AND PRIVATE SCHOOL ENTRIES AND WITHDRAWALS

		TRANSFERS INTO OAK VIEW			TRANSFERS OUT OF OAK VIEW		
		MINORITY	MAJORITY	TOTAL	MINORITY	MAJORITY	TOTAL
	# Requests	51	76	127	17	22	39
1983-84	% Approved	92%	78%	83%	76%	77%	77%
	(# Approved)	(47)	(59)	(106)	(13)	(17)	(30)
	# Private	--	--	5	--	--	9
	# Requests	28	49	77	12	23	35
1984-85	% Approved	89%	100%	96%	92%	100%	97%
	(# Approved)	(25)	(49)	(74)	(11)	(23)	(34)
	# Private	--	--	9	--	--	12
	# Requests	39	60	99	18	19	37
1985-86	% Approved	77%	82%	80%	72%	89%	81%
	(# Approved)	(30)	(49)	(79)	(13)	(17)	(30)
	# Private	--	--	--	--	--	--
	# Requests	118	185	303	47	64	111
TOTAL	% Approved	86%	85%	85%	72%	89%	81%
	(# Approved)	(102)	(157)	(259)	(34)	(57)	
	# Private	--	--	14	--	--	21

*Data on private school entries and withdrawals are available for the 1983-84 and 1984-85 school years only. Race data are not available.

OAK VIEW

THE PROGRAM

Students in the magnet program at Oak View are taught the entire Montgomery County curriculum in French and are expected to speak in French at all times while in the classroom. All text books are in French and students who begin the program in kindergarten usually become proficient in the language by the end of the second grade. There is also a partial Spanish Immersion Program and a regular English program for students not in the French Immersion Program.

This program has been quite popular and has reduced the minority percentage at Oak View considerably. As a result of its popularity, Oak View often found itself the subject of proposed pairings with other higher minority schools in the area. Beginning in the 1986-87 school year, Oak View will be partially paired with New Hampshire Estates. The French Immersion Program will remain in place at Oak View but a reading/language arts magnet will be split between the two schools.

MAGNET APPEAL

Oak View is by far the most requested magnet elementary school in either the Blair or Bethesda-Chevy Chase clusters. Between 1983 and 1985, 303 parents requested transfers for their children into Oak View. Almost 60 percent of its current student body live beyond the designated school boundaries and transferred in. Fourteen students entered Oak View from private schools during the 1983 and 1984 school years.

There were 111 requests to leave Oak View between 1983 and 1985 to attend other MCPS schools and 21 withdrawals to private schools during 1983 and 1984.

For both minority and majority students, more requests were approved for students to enter Oak View than were requests for students to leave.

TRANSFER REQUESTS

Eighty-five percent of all transfer requests into and out of Oak View were approved in the past three years. The overall approval rate was the same for majority and minority students requesting transfers into Oak View but slightly higher for white students requesting to leave. These figures are somewhat misleading, however, since French Immersion students are predominantly majority group while the regular English program at Oak View is predominantly minority.

The approval rate for both in and out transfer requests declined somewhat between 1984 and 1985.

UTILIZATION

Oak View is approximately three quarters full for the 1985-1986 school year. The building was renovated during the previous year.

RACIAL BALANCE

Oak View is one of the few elementary schools in the Blair cluster whose minority percentage is within the Board of Education guidelines. Since 1981, the percentage of minority students declined from 63.1 to 40.7 percent. This is partially due to the closing of Four Corners Elementary School in 1982 and partially due to the positive impact of transfers. Transfers had a greater impact on reducing the minority percentage than at any other magnet school in either cluster.

PINE CREST

DESIGNATED MAGNET FEATURES: Computer literacy magnet

MINORITY COMPOSITION AND SCHOOL UTILIZATION: 1976-1985

	1976	1981	1983	1985	% MINORITY CHANGE, 1981-1985	
PERCENT MINORITY						ESTIMATED EFFECT OF TRANSFERS ON 1985 MINORITY COMPOSITION
PINE CREST	22.5%	46.7%	63.3%	61.9%	+15.2%	
CLUSTER AVERAGE	40.3%	55.9%	59.1%	61.5%	+5.6%	
MCPS AVERAGE	16.4%	23.8%	26.9%	30.1%	+6.3%	0%
ENROLLMENT	342	246	330	316	////////////////	
UTILIZATION	72.8%	52.3%	88.5%	92.1%	////////////////	

TRANSFER AND PRIVATE SCHOOL ENTRIES AND WITHDRAWALS

		TRANSFERS INTO PINE CREST			TRANSFERS OUT OF PINE CREST		
		MINORITY	MAJORITY	TOTAL	MINORITY	MAJORITY	TOTAL
	# Requests	8	6	14	8	3	11
1983-84	% Approved	88%	50%	71%	100%	100%	100%
	(# Approved)	(7)	(3)	(10)	(8)	(3)	(11)
	# Private	--	--	7	--	--	0
	# Requests	9	8	17	6	0	6
1984-85	% Approved	100%	75%	88%	83%	--	83%
	(# Approved)	(9)	(6)	(15)	(5)	--	(5)
	# Private	--	--	6	--	--	4
	# Requests	10	7	17	4	3	7
1985-86	% Approved	80%	86%	82%	75%	100%	86%
	(# Approved)	(8)	(6)	(14)	(3)	(3)	(6)
	# Private	--	--	--	--	--	--
	# Requests	27	21	48	18	6	24
TOTAL	% Approved	89%	71%	81%	89%	100%	92%
	(# Approved)	(24)	(15)	(39)	(16)	(6)	(22)
	# Private*	--	--	13	--	--	4

*Data on private school entries and withdrawals are available for the 1983-84 and 1984-85 school years only. Race data are not available.

PINE CREST

THE PROGRAM

Pine Crest Elementary School is paired with Montgomery Knolls and serves students in grades three through six. The computer literacy program at Pine Crest attempts to reach all students in all classes. At the beginning of the school year, all teachers developed a "computer time line" describing how they would integrate computers into the curriculum. A wide range of computer applications resulted including: the development of a booklet on jobs and careers, using Bank Street Writer and graphics packages; communicating with a fifth grade class in Toronto via modem; and using LOGO for special effects in a video produced by students. A writing laboratory is used by all fifth and sixth grade students and is available to third and fourth graders at noon and after school. Pine Crest has 23 Apple computers, 2 PETS, and 15 IBM PC Jrs.

Despite a well implemented program, the principal and curriculum coordinator feel that a major issue facing the magnet program at Pine Crest is its ability to remain unique. As computers become more common in Montgomery County elementary schools, the attractiveness of a computer magnet may decline.

Pine Crest is the only school in the Blair cluster with before and after school child care.

MAGNET APPEAL

Despite the fact that the program at Pine Crest is well implemented and developed, it has not attracted a large number of transfer students. In the past three years, only 48 parents requested to have their children transferred into Pine Crest. Slightly less than a fifth of its current student body have transferred into the school. Thirteen students entered Pine Crest from private schools during the 1983 and 1984 school years.

At the same time, however, only 24 parents requested to have their children transferred out of Pine Crest and only 4 left during 1983 and 1984 to attend private schools.

For both minority and majority students, more requests to enter Pine Crest were approved than were requests to leave.

TRANSFER REQUESTS

Eighty-five percent of all transfer requests into and out of Pine Crest in the past three years were approved. Minority requests into the school were more likely to be approved than were majority requests. All 6 majority requests to leave Pine Crest were approved. There was little change in overall approval rates either into or out of the school over the last two years.

UTILIZATION

The utilization rate at Pine Crest has increased considerably since 1981. The school was 92 percent full for the 1985-1986 school year.

RACIAL BALANCE

The percentage of minority students has increased considerably since 1981, and rather dramatically since 1976. Part of this increase in minority students results from the administrative pairing of Pine Crest with Montgomery Knolls in 1982. Transfers appear to have no impact upon the 1985 minority composition of the school.

PINEY BRANCH

DESIGNATED MAGNET FEATURES: Science/Math/Computer and Gifted and Talented Magnet

MINORITY COMPOSITION AND SCHOOL UTILIZATION: 1976-1985

	1976*	1981	1983	1985	% MINORITY CHANGE, 1981-1985	
PERCENT						
MINORITY						
PINEY BRANCH	49.7%	57.3%	60.9%	67.1%	+9.8%	ESTIMATED EFFECT OF TRANSFERS ON 1985 MINORITY COMPOSITION
CLUSTER AVERAGE	40.3%	55.9%	59.1%	61.5%	+5.6%	
MCPS AVERAGE	16.4%	23.8%	26.9%	30.1%	+5.3%	0%
ENROLLMENT	---	400	430	472	////////////////////	
UTILIZATION	---	60.6%	56.4%	68.8%	////////////////////	

*Piney Branch was a middle school in 1976.

TRANSFER AND PRIVATE SCHOOL ENTRIES AND WITHDRAWALS

		PINEY BRANCH			PINEY BRANCH		
		MINORITY	MAJORITY	TOTAL	MINORITY	MAJORITY	TOTAL
	# Requests	10	6	16	17	15	32
1983-84	% Approved	80%	100%	88%	82%	27%	56%
	(# Approved)	(8)	(6)	(14)	(14)	(4)	(18)
	# Private	--	--	9	--	--	8
	# Requests	23	15	38	8	6	14
1984-85	% Approved	96%	93%	95%	100%	100%	100%
	(# Approved)	(22)	(14)	(36)	(8)	(6)	(14)
	# Private	--	--	9	--	--	6
	# Requests	11	15	26	9	5	14
1985-86	% Approved	100%	100%	100%	78%	60%	71%
	(# Approved)	(11)	(15)	(26)	(7)	(3)	(10)
	# Private	--	--	--	--	--	--
	# Requests	44	36	80	34	26	60
TOTAL	% Approved	93%	97%	95%	85%	58%	70%
	(# Approved)	(41)	(35)	(76)	(29)	(13)	(42)
	# Private	--	--	18	--	--	14

*Data on private school entries and withdrawals are available for the 1983-84 and 1984-85 school years only. Race data are not available.

PINEY BRANCH

THE PROGRAM

Piney Branch continues and expands upon the math/science/computer and gifted programs of its two feeder schools, Takoma Park and East Silver Spring. Almost half of the students are in the gifted/talented program. Full-time staff specialists in the areas of science, math and computers teach those courses in their own fully-equipped labs. An active science program sponsors a science fair each spring where about 70 percent of the pupils exhibit their projects, and recently representatives from the school's Young Astronaut Council met with President Reagan in a day-long reception.

Piney Branch is a large, well-equipped and well-staffed school with many extras. In addition to the science, math and computer labs, there is a swimming pool, large cafeteria, and a separate gymnasium. The open space architecture was recently altered to enclosed classrooms. Through creative scheduling of staff and classroom space, many classes are kept below 20 pupils, and most classes with 25 or more pupils have two adults in the room.

MAGNET APPEAL

Eighty parents requested transfers for their children into Piney Branch in the last three years. Approximately one fifth of the current student body at the school transferred in from outside the school's administrative boundaries. Another 18 students entered Piney Branch from private schools during the 1983 and 1984 school years. There were fewer transfer requests, 60, to transfer out of Piney Branch than requests to transfer in. Fourteen students left the school to attend private schools during the two years for which data are available.

For both minority and majority students, more requests to transfer in were approved than were requests to transfer out.

TRANSFER REQUESTS

Eighty-four percent of all transfer requests into and out of Piney Branch were approved in the last three years. While there was very little difference between the majority and minority acceptance rates for requests to transfer into the school, minority students were much more likely to have their requests approved for transfers out of Piney Branch.

The approval rate for requests into Piney Branch, while high for all three years, increased over this period of time. The approval rate for requests out of Piney Branch increased considerably between the 1983 and 1984 school years but dropped again for the 1985 school year.

UTILIZATION

The school's utilization rate of 69 percent indicates adequate space available to accommodate more in-transfer pupils.

RACIAL BALANCE

The percentage of minority students at Piney Branch has increased slightly faster than it has for the Blair cluster as a whole. As with its feeder school, Takoma Park, all minority group in-transfer requests for pupils qualifying for the gifted/talented program are admitted into the school. Transfers into and out of Piney Branch had no effect on the minority composition of the school in 1985.

ROLLING TERRACE

DESIGNATED MAGNET FEATURES: Latin/International Magnet

MINORITY COMPOSITION AND SCHOOL UTILIZATION: 1976-1985

	1976	1981	1983	1985	% MINORITY CHANGE, 1981-1985	
ROLLING TERRACE	53.3%	81.3%	79.7%	79.6%	-1.7%	ESTIMATED EFFECT OF TRANSFERS ON 1985 MINORITY COMPOSITION
PERCENT MINORITY CLUSTER AVERAGE	48.3%	55.9%	59.1%	61.3%	+5.6%	
MCPS AVERAGE	16.4%	23.8%	26.9%	30.1%	+6.3%	
ENROLLMENT	318	327	399	390	////////////////////	
UTILIZATION	72.3%	74.3%	109.9%	107.4%	////////////////////	

TRANSFER AND PRIVATE SCHOOL ENTRIES AND WITHDRAWALS

		TRANSFERS INTO ROLLING TERRACE			TRANSFERS OUT OF ROLLING TERRACE		
		MINORITY	MAJORITY	TOTAL	MINORITY	MAJORITY	TOTAL
	# Requests	16	5	21	23	16	39
1983-84	% Approved	100%	100%	100%	70%	100%	82%
	(# Approved)	(16)	(5)	(21)	(16)	(16)	(32)
	# Private	--	--	8	--	--	8
	# Requests	29	6	35	31	20	51
1984-85	% Approved	97%	100%	97%	97%	85%	92%
	(# Approved)	(28)	(6)	(34)	(30)	(17)	(47)
	# Private	--	--	5	--	--	5
	# Requests	21	2	23	29	8	37
1985-86	% Approved	95%	100%	96%	86%	75%	80%
	(# Approved)	(20)	(2)	(22)	(25)	(6)	(31)
	# Private	--	--	--	--	--	--
	# Requests	66	13	79	83	44	127
TOTAL	% Approved	97%	100%	97%	86%	89%	87%
	(# Approved)	(64)	(13)	(77)	(71)	(39)	(110)
	# Private	--	--	13	--	--	13

*Data on private school entries and withdrawals are available for the 1983-84 and 1984-85 school years only. Race data are not available.

ROLLING TERRACE

THE PROGRAM

The Latin Language magnet program at Rolling Terrace practices a 2,000-year-old saying, "Repetition is the mother of learning", and students in grades four through six are expanding their understanding of English through Latin vocabulary drills, word derivation exercises and Latin poetry and song. An international theme pervades the hallways, the classrooms and the curriculum. Flags from 29 countries in the halls represent the countries of birth of the students, and the art, music and social studies curricula reiterate the theme of international awareness and cooperation. From the cosmopolitan perspective of the staff, the school is the most racially balanced school in MCPS since the four major ethnic groups are distributed quite evenly across the student population. The school holds a Danforth Foundation grant to promote its international theme.

The school also features an all-day kindergarten section, a Spanish club for pupils above third grade with instruction in formal Spanish, one-and-one-half hours of Spanish instruction per week for pupils below fourth grade, and an extended day program for study skills and many additional mini-courses on topics ranging from computers to drawing to international foods.

MAGNET APPEAL

Rolling Terrace received 79 requests for transfers into the school in the last three years. Sixty six of these requests were from minority students. Its current student body consists of approximately 16 percent transfer students, one of the lowest percentages among the ten Blair cluster schools. Thirteen students entered Rolling Terrace from private schools during the 1983 and 1984 school years.

The number of students requesting transfers out of the school, 127, was considerably larger than the number of students requesting to transfer in. The same number of students left Rolling Terrace to attend private schools as entered from private schools during 1983 and 1984. For both minority and majority students, more requests to leave Rolling Terrace were approved than requests to enter the school.

TRANSFER REQUESTS

An exceptionally large percentage of transfer requests both into and out of Rolling Terrace were approved in the last three years. Almost all requests to transfer into Rolling Terrace, both majority and minority, were approved.

For both minority and majority students, there were more requests to transfer out of Rolling Terrace than there were requests to transfer in. Most of these requests were also approved.

UTILIZATION

Rolling Terrace is an overcrowded school with a utilization rate of 107 percent. Current plans to expand the number of classrooms should enhance the appeal of the school.

RACIAL BALANCE

While the minority percentage at Rolling Terrace is quite high, it has not changed very much in the past five years. In fact, the percentage of minority students has decreased slightly. Rolling Terrace has the second highest percentage of minority students of the ten elementary schools in the Blair cluster. Transfers into and out of the school increased the 1985 minority percentage by five points.

TAKOMA PARK

DESIGNATED MAGNET FEATURES: Gifted and talented magnet

MINORITY COMPOSITION AND SCHOOL UTILIZATION: 1976-1985

	1976	1981	1983	1985	% MINORITY CHANGE, 1981-1985	
PERCENT						
TAKOMA PARK	57.4%	63.8%	67.3%	67.5%	+3.7%	ESTIMATED EFFECT OF TRANSFERS ON 1985 MINORITY COMPOSITION
CLUSTER AVERAGE	40.3%	55.9%	59.1%	61.5%	+5.6%	
MCPS AVERAGE	16.4%	23.8%	26.9%	30.1%	+6.3%	+1%
ENROLLMENT	509	448	425	408	////////////////	
UTILIZATION	83.4%	73.4%	77.3%	78.5%	////////////////	

TRANSFER AND PRIVATE SCHOOL ENTRIES AND WITHDRAWALS

		TRANSFERS INTO TAKOMA PARK			TRANSFERS OUT OF TAKOMA PARK		
		MINORITY	MAJORITY	TOTAL	MINORITY	MAJORITY	TOTAL
	# Requests	24	23	47	16	22	38
1983-84	% Approved	96%	91%	94%	75%	73%	74%
	(# Approved)	(23)	(21)	(44)	(12)	(16)	(28)
	# Private	--	--	10	--	--	10
	# Requests	35	30	65	22	11	33
1984-85	% Approved	100%	100%	100%	82%	91%	85%
	(# Approved)	(35)	(30)	(65)	(18)	(10)	(28)
	# Private	--	--	11	--	--	7
	# Requests	25	19	44	11	21	32
1985-86	% Approved	72%	100%	84%	73%	98%	84%
	(# Approved)	(18)	(19)	(37)	(8)	(19)	(27)
	# Private	--	--	--	--	--	--
	# Requests	84	72	156	49	54	103
TOTAL	% Approved	90%	97%	94%	78%	83%	81%
	(# Approved)	(76)	(70)	(146)	(38)	(45)	(83)
	# Private*	--	--	21	--	--	17

*Data on private school entries and withdrawals are available for the 1983-84 and 1984-85 school years only. Race data are not available.

TAKOMA PARK

THE PROGRAM

Takoma Park offers a gifted and talented program to students in kindergarten through the third grade. Not all students in the school participate in this program, yet there are spinoffs for the regular students such as the availability of computers for writing, smaller class sizes and teachers trained to nurture giftedness. All students attend classes together for part of the day. During the remainder of the day, gifted and talented children are taken out of the regular classrooms for science and social studies instruction. This serves to reduce class size for all students. Also, there is a special math program (CSMP) for all students in kindergarten and first grade, and for children gifted in math in grades two and three.

Other features of the school include a PADI program for potentially gifted children, and all students have access to computers at periods throughout the week and in an after-school program. Recently constructed, the school is attractive and is well-equipped with a gymnasium, music room, cafeteria, and faculty lounges. The open space classrooms were recently converted to enclosed class space.

MAGNET APPEAL

Takoma Park attracts a considerable number of students. In the past three years, 156 parents applied to transfer their children into the school. Its current student body consists of 24 percent transfer students. Twenty one students entered Takoma Park during the 1983 and 1984 school years from private schools.

Slightly over 100 parents requested to transfer their children out of Takoma Park in the last three years. Private schools attracted 17 students. For both majority and minority students, more requests were approved to enter Takoma Park than to leave the school.

TRANSFER REQUESTS

Eighty-eight percent of all transfer requests into and out of Takoma Park in the last three years were approved. Requests to transfer in were somewhat more likely to be approved than were requests to transfer out, both for minority and majority group children. The approval rate for requests into Takoma Park dropped slightly in the last two years while the approval rate for requests out of Takoma Park remained steady. All of these approval rates, however, were high.

Transfer rules for entering Takoma Park differ from those of the eight other magnet schools in the Blair cluster which do not offer a gifted and talented program. A transfer is automatic for any child who meets the criteria for the gifted and talented program and whose parents request the program.

UTILIZATION

The utilization rate of 78 percent leaves adequate space for quality school programs and additional student in-transfers.

RACIAL BALANCE

The percentage of minority students at Takoma Park has increased slightly since 1981, from 63.8 percent to 67.5 percent. Takoma Park remains above the cluster average in its minority percentage and exceeds the Board of Education guideline. Transfers had little effect on the minority composition of the school for 1985.

SUMMARY OF IMPLEMENTATION FINDINGS

THE MAGNET PROGRAMS IN AREA 1 ARE, WITH A FEW EXCEPTIONS, STAFFED, EQUIPPED AND OPERATIONAL IN THE SCHOOLS. PUPIL-STAFF RATIOS ARE BETTER IN MAGNET THAN NONMAGNET SCHOOLS. PARENTS ARE RESPONDING WITH A GREATER VOLUME OF TRANSFERS IN MAGNET THAN NONMAGNET SCHOOLS. SEVERAL PROGRAMS MAY NEED MORE TIME OR SOME REDESIGN TO REACH FULL DRAWING POTENTIAL.

The staff planning directives for the second generation of magnet programs in April 1983 called for continuing some former magnet programs, revising other existing programs, and phasing in new magnet programs in some schools. Full implementation of the magnet plan was expected to require two or three years because of many changing conditions in the schools — recent school closures; turnover of several principals; new grade-pairings and school boundary changes; increasing minority enrollments; overutilization in some schools; and the need for staff to coordinate the new magnet plans.

A series of site visits to the schools confirmed that these factors retarded program implementation in many schools. Thus, the drawing power of the programs analysed in this report may not represent their full potential. Given another year or two of continued program development and consolidation, they may attract more students into their respective schools. Table 3.2 below summarizes our assessment of the implementation levels for the Fall of 1985.

Four aspects of the programs are rated on a simple two-point scale to indicate: (1) More support needed; or, (2) Satisfactory implementation. Implementation levels were judged by site visits to the schools without detailed observation instruments. Most principals would, of course, like to get more support for their programs anytime, even though they are rated "2" here. However, the purpose of the summary here is only to indicate whether the programs were in place and operational, or to direct attention to those schools needing more program development.

The program features rated in Table 3.2 include:

- STAFF — Does the school have sufficient teachers, aides, resource teachers or a coordinator to implement its program?
- SPACE — Does the school have adequate classroom and office space to accommodate the magnet program features and obtain favorable class sizes? Portable classrooms are judged here as adequate space although their presence indicates an overcrowding condition in the school.
- EQUIPMENT — Does the school have sufficient equipment specific to their magnet features in order to operate the magnet program?
- ORGANIZATION -- Does the school have a clearly articulated program with specified goals, a staff plan, procedures coordinated with the other instructional and support features of the school?

TABLE 3.2
IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF MAGNET PROGRAM FEATURES

SCHOOL	STAFF	SPACE	EQUIPMENT	ORGANIZATION	SUMMARY
East Silver Spring	2	2	2	2	100 %
Forest Knolls	2	2	2	2	100 %
Highland View	2	1	2	2	75 %
Montgomery Knolls	2	2	1	1	50 %
New Hampshire Estates	1	1	1	1	00
Oak View	2	2	2	2	100 %
Pine Crest	2	1	2	2	75 %
Piney Branch	2	2	2	2	100 %
Rolling Terrace	1	1	1	2	25 %
Takoma Park	2	2	2	2	100 %

SCALE: 1=Needs further support
2=Satisfactory implementation

Many of the newly-established magnet programs have not yet reached their full potential. For some schools, such as Montgomery Knolls, more computer equipment is projected. For others, such as Rolling Terrace and New Hampshire Estates, more permanent classroom space will enable fuller staffing for the magnet program. And still other schools just starting a new magnet feature need at least two years to consolidate and extent their program ideas, for example Highland View. At New Hampshire Estates a well-conceived program has not yet been implemented. The severe crowding conditions in the school will, until remedied, likely preclude a meaningful magnet program.

The full implementation of a magnet program may demand extra instructional space for several reasons:

- o Extra lab space is needed, e.g. for computers, science, gifted/talented projects, communications lab, etc.
- o Staff supplements may enhance pupil/adult ratios, but classroom space limits the actual class size.
- o Different instructional groupings within the school demand separate classroom space, e.g. separate G/T class sections or foreign language sections.

Between Fall 1983 and Fall 1985, three of the magnet schools obtained a total of 10 portable classrooms, and four of these portables were acquired only during 1985. The extra space was crucial to the magnet program implementation in Highland View. Recent plans call for the addition of 57 rooms across five of the magnet schools by 1987. Such renovations and expansions will likely contribute to the full implementation of magnet programs in these schools.

The magnet schools generally have more favorable ratios of pupils to teachers and aides than do the nonmagnet schools. For example, the average for magnet schools in Area 1 is 22 pupils per classroom teacher, and for nonmagnet Area 1 schools the average ratio was 25.4. Also, there is an average of 50 pupils per aide for magnet schools while the ratio for nonmagnet schools averaged 103. In 1983 and 1984 the pupil/aide ratios were half these levels, but Chapter I reductions in 1985 diminished the level of support for aides in all schools.

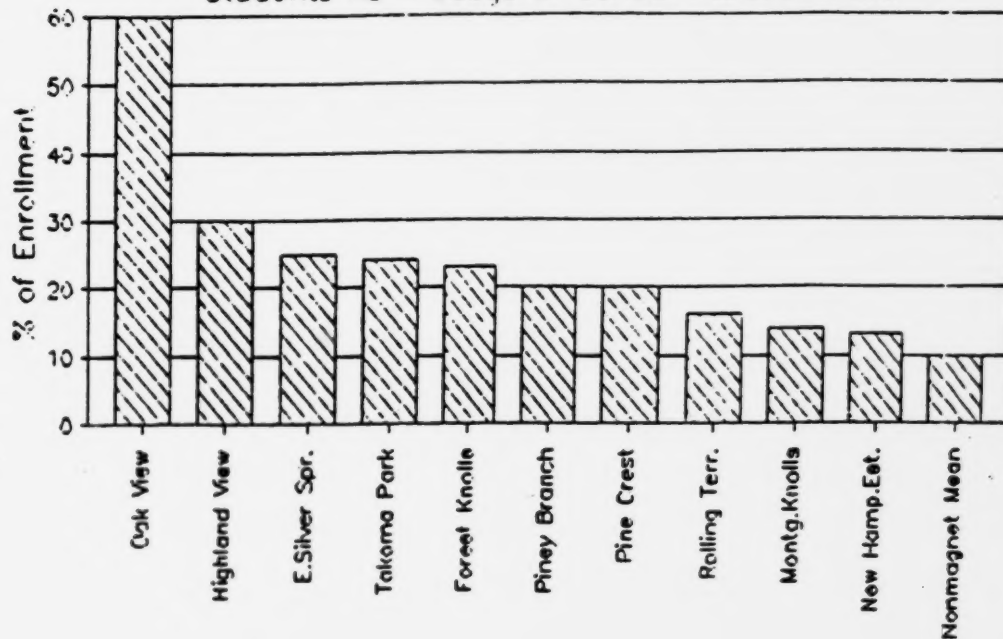
The position of magnet curriculum coordinator in the schools is crucial to implementing a strong magnet program. The coordinator's planning, teacher training, classroom instructional time and administrative coordination ease the instructional load of the teachers and the administrative burden of the principals. With creative planning and instructional sharing among staff in the magnet schools, the curriculum coordinators often produce class sizes ranging between 16 and 20 pupils in the academic subjects.

SCHOOL APPEAL

Parents in Area 1 have responded with enthusiasm to the attractions in the magnet schools. The volume of in-transfers in a school is a good register of public interest in the school. For example, the magnet schools average about 24 percent of their enrollments as in-transfer pupils while the nonmagnet schools in Area 1 average only about a 10 percent in-transfer rate. Figure 3.1 summarizes school appeal as the schools' proportions of in-transfer pupils.

The principle reason which parents cite for pupil transfers, after program features, is child care. For example, almost half (48 percent) of the parents transferring into a magnet school cited a school program reason. Yet, 28 percent of those parents also cited child care as a reason for the transfer request. For parents out-bound from the magnet cluster, child care was cited on about half (52 percent) of their transfer requests, and they mentioned school programs only 17 percent of the time. These data suggest that expanded child care services may prove an effective attraction if incorporated into the magnet schools.

Fig. 3.1 Percentage of In-Transfer Students As A Gauge of School Attractiveness



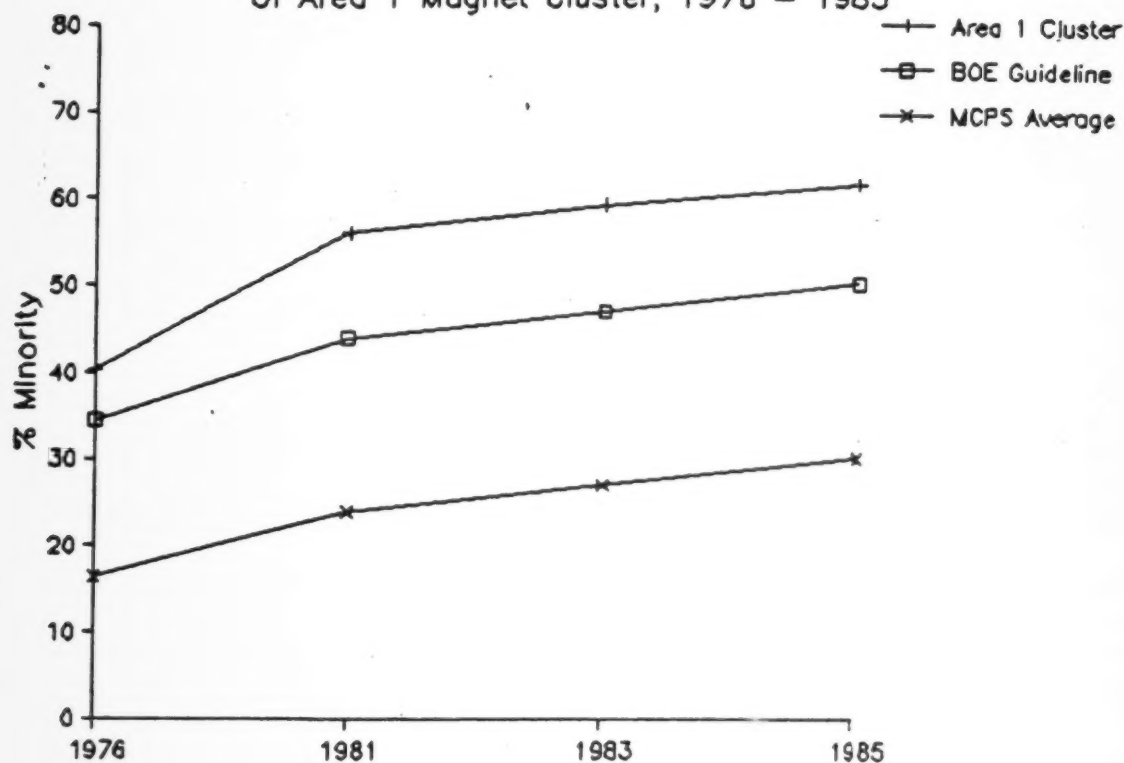
In Figure 3.1 Oak View stands out with 60 percent of its enrollments as in-transfers. Next highest is Highland View with 30 percent of its student body as in-transfers. The other schools range between about 15 and 25 percent in their in-transfer proportions. The three schools judged as needing the most support for program implementation, New Hampshire Estates, Rolling Terrace and Montgomery Knolls, had in-transfer rates approaching the average for nonmagnet schools, and were the lowest for the cluster.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS ON RACIAL BALANCE IN AREA 1

THE RACIAL BALANCE OF THE AREA 1 CLUSTER HAS STABILIZED WITH SOME SCHOOLS SHOWING INCREASES AND SOME SHOWING DECREASES IN RACIAL BALANCE. THE MINORITY COMPOSITION OF THE CLUSTER REMAINS DISTANT FROM THE SCHOOL DISTRICT AVERAGE.

The net effect on racial balance of the magnet programs described in the foregoing section has left the magnet school cluster's average minority composition at 31 percentage points above the MCPS average minority percent. This is the same level of racial balance found for these schools in 1981. The MCPS average during that period increased from 23.8 percent minority in 1981 to 30.1 percent in 1985, and the Area 1 magnet cluster average climbed at the same rate, as portrayed below in Figure 3.2. Recall that racial balance here refers to the school's or the cluster's percentage point-spread from the MCPS minority composition.

Fig. 3.2 Minority Composition
Of Area 1 Magnet Cluster, 1976 - 1985



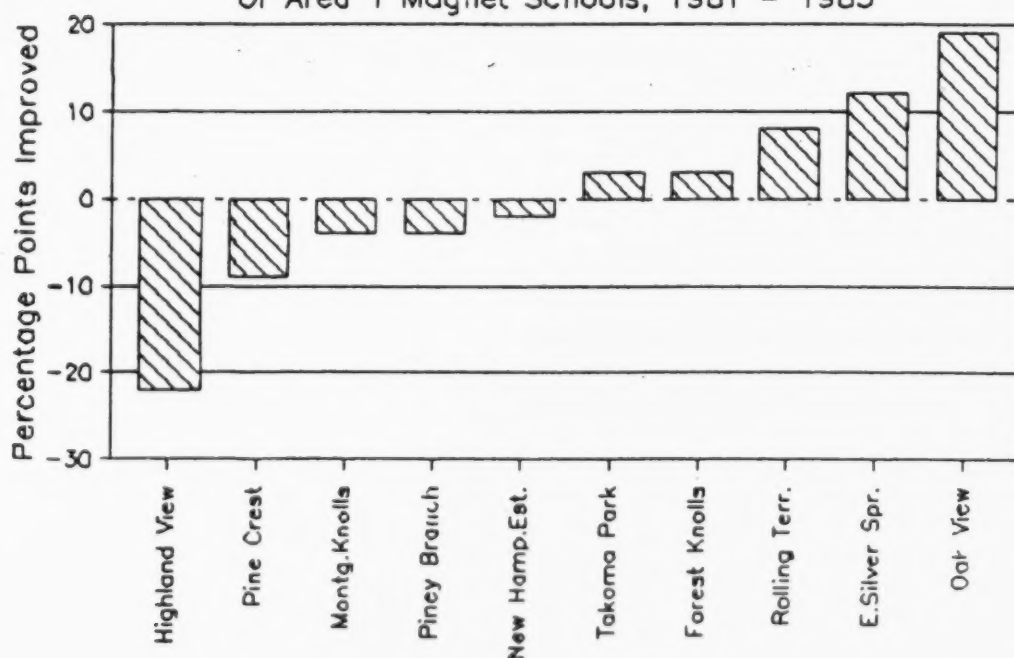
Thus, racial balance of the magnet schools has stabilized. However, it has not decreased to a point below the BOE guideline of 20 percentage points above the school district average. In this section we ask "Why?", and pull together the findings from the 10 magnet schools to find the answer.

We examine first the racial balance changes in each of the 10 magnet schools from 1981 to 1985 to see which schools have experienced the most and least racial balancing. Then, since voluntary transfers are intended to be the active ingredient in producing magnet school racial balancing, we examine the contribution of pupil transfers to school racial balance (as recorded on the statistical briefs). Finally, we analyse the flow of transfer requests and the suitability of the requests to the needs of racial balance in the schools.

Racial Balance School by School

The racial balance changes in the 10 Area 1 magnet schools from 1981 to 1985 are outlined in Figure 3.3. Once again, racial balance here means the percentage points' distance from the MCPS minority composition. The MCPS average is a moving target over the years, and we adjust for this fact. Since Figure 3.3 shows the improvement in racial balance, a bar of, for example, +10 means that the school has narrowed its distance from the MCPS average by 10 percentage points over the four-year period. On the other hand, a bar of -10 means that a school has drifted 10 percentage points farther from the MCPS average during that period.

Fig. 3.3 Racial Balance Changes
Of Area 1 Magnet Schools, 1981 - 1985



Oak View Elementary gives the strongest showing with a remarkable 19 point improvement in its racial balance. And, Highland View shows the opposite picture with a 22 point increase in racial imbalance. The other eight schools fall between these two extremes, and five of these schools show changes in either direction of less than four percentage points. In fact, the overall pattern of the racial balance changes portrays a zero-sum game whereby racial balance gains in one school were generally offset by losses in another school. These school by school data explain the "No change" condition for the cluster average portrayed in Figure 3.2.

Can we conclude directly from these data which schools are the most effective magnets, then simply replicate their programs elsewhere? Not quite.

Recall that three conditions govern the racial composition of the schools: voluntary transfers; mandatory school assignment practices; and community demographic flux. In the discussion that follows we find that these three conditions sometimes work at odds against each other. Thus, a school whose magnet program is working for racial balance may also have other conditions working against its racial balance.

Effects of Pupil Transfers on Racial Balance

VOLUNTARY PUPIL TRANSFERS SOMETIMES HINDER AND SOMETIMES HELP SCHOOL RACIAL BALANCE. TRANSFER EFFECTS ON RACIAL BALANCE MAY BE OFFSET BY THE EFFECTS OF SCHOOL ASSIGNMENT POLICIES AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES.

Since the computer records indicate a child's home school as well as the actual school of attendance, we were able to "untransfer" all pupils. This simulation retrieved each school's out-transfers, and returned the in-transfers to their home schools. By comparing the school's actual minority composition to its minority composition under the simulated "no transfer" condition, we determined whether the presence of transfer pupils enhances the school's racial balance (lowered the minority composition), or detracts from racial balance (increased the minority composition). The results are summarized in Figure 3.4.

FIG. 3.4 How Much Do Voluntary Transfers Enhance or Detract from School Racial Balance?

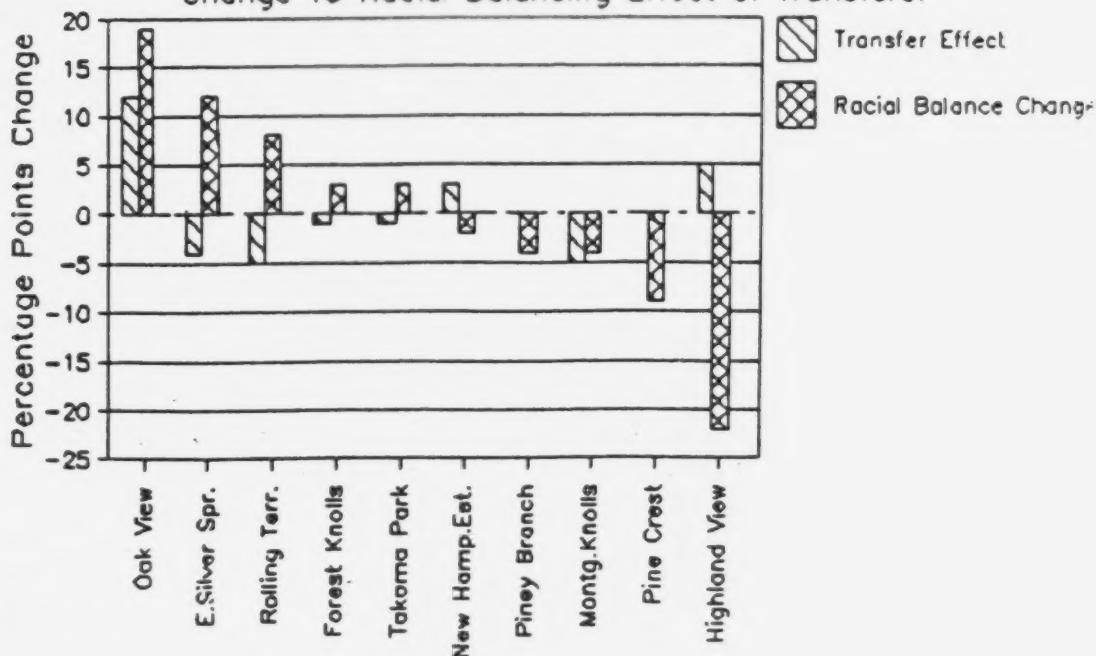


The two schools with the highest in-transfer rates, Oak View and Highland View, also had the highest transfer effect on racial balance. Yet, in East Silver Spring, which had a relatively high 25 percent in-transfer rate (as seen above in Figure 3.1), the presence of those in-transfers actually increase the minority composition of the school by four percentage points over its "home school" population.

Thus, voluntary pupil transfers do not always enhance a school's racial balance.

Figure 3.5 provides a more complete look at this phenomon. The "transfer effect" on racial balance for each of the ten schools is taken from Figure 3.4 and placed alongside the schools' overall racial balance changes from 1981 to 1985 taken from Figure 3.3. We expect to see more positive transfer effects on racial balance leading to more positive overall racial balance changes, but this is true for only one school (Oak View). Rather, three other schools registered positive racial balance effects due to transfers, but they experienced an overall increase in racial isolation between 1981 and 1985 (Highland View, Pine Crest, New Hampshire Estates). Furthermore, four schools showed overall racial balance improvements even though the effects of their transfers worked against them (e.g. East Silver Spring, Rolling Terrace).

Fig. 3.5 Comparing 1981-85 Racial Balance
Change To Racial Balancing Effect of Transfers.

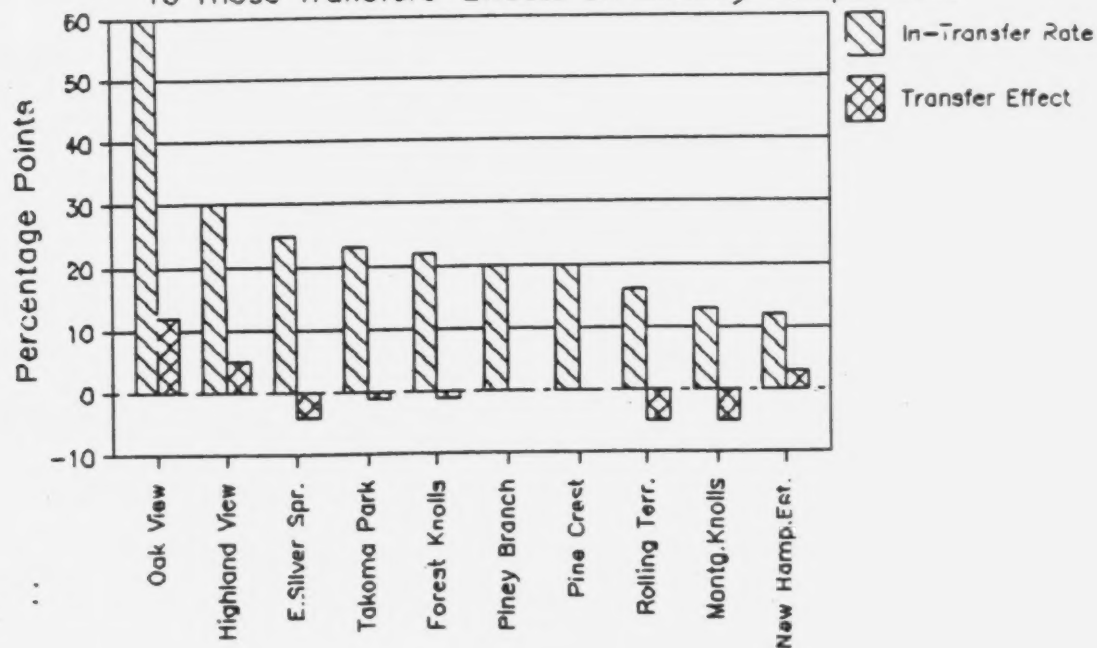


The transfer effects on racial balance are generally not strong enough to offset the effects of mandatory school assignment plans and community demographic flux. For example, Highland View began a split articulation plan in 1983 whereby it enrolled some minority pupils in grades four, five and six from the New Hampshire Estates area. This plan increased Highland View's racial imbalance. On the other hand, its magnet features drew enough majority group pupils to offset some, but not all, of this increase.

We can ask, "How much transfer activity is required in order to produce a positive transfer effect on the school's racial balance?" Figure 3.6 provides a partial answer to this question. Here the school's in-transfer rate, expressed from Figure 3.3 as a percentage of the school's enrollment, is plotted against the transfer effect on racial balance taken from Figure 3.4.

We expect to see a higher volume of in-transfers lead to a higher positive effect on school racial balance. We actually see this happen for only two schools whose in-transfer rates exceed 30 percent. For the other eight schools the in-transfer rates bear no relationship to transfer effect on racial balance.

Fig. 3.6 Comparing Volume of Transfers
To Those Transfers' Effects on Minority Composition.



These data indicate that many of the transfers which are taking place are not serving the needs of racial balance. It is necessary, then, to look closer at the flow of events in the transfer request process.

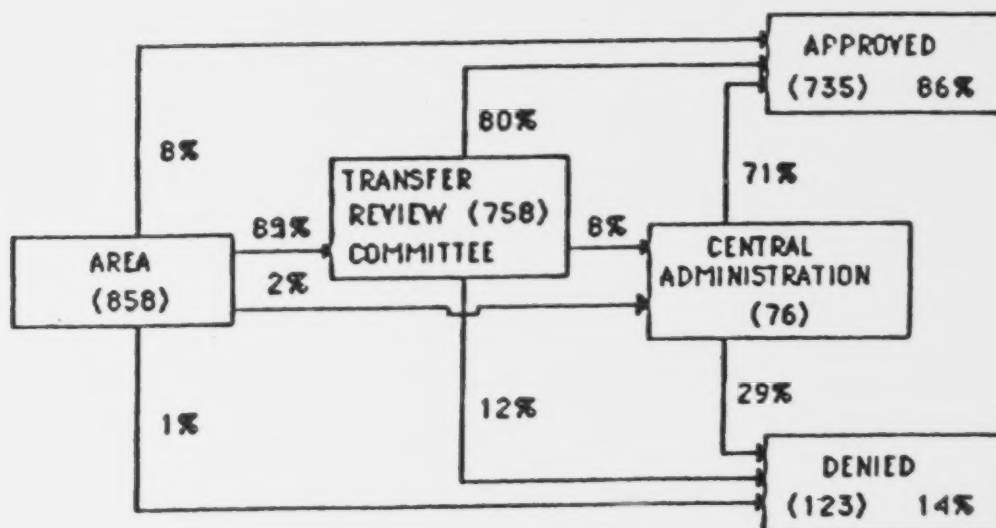
THE TRANSFER REQUEST PROCESS AND RACIAL BALANCE

REQUESTS SUPPORTIVE OF RACIAL BALANCE ARE OFFSET BY REQUESTS WORKING AGAINST RACIAL BALANCE. SINCE 86 PERCENT OF THE REQUESTS ARE APPROVED, THE TRANSFER PROCESS HAS LITTLE OVERALL EFFECT ON RACIAL BALANCE OF THE CLUSTER.

The Transfer Request Process. Transfer requests are originated by parents at their home schools, then forwarded to the Area Administrative Office. The requests involving magnet schools are then forwarded for decisions to the Transfer Review Committee whose task it is to approve or deny the requests according to the transfer policy. The transfer policy states that racial balance in the magnet schools must be considered in the approval process. Requests which are denied by the Transfer Review Committee may be appealed by parents to higher levels including the Associate Superintendent, the Superintendent or finally the Board of Education.

Figure 3.7 summarizes the results of these procedures for the 1984-5 and 1985-6 school years. We found 858 transfer requests involving either in- or out-transfers for the ten Area 1 elementary magnet schools. The Area Offices approved eight percent of these requests directly, denied one percent, and passed 89 percent to the Transfer Review Committee (two percent were appealed directly to Central Administration). The Transfer Review Committee approved 80 percent of the requests, denied 12 percent, and an additional 8 percent denied were later appealed to Central Administration. The Central Administration, combining all levels, approved 71 percent of the appeals it heard, and denied 29 percent. In the end, 86 percent of all requests in the last two years were approved, and 14 percent were denied.

Fig. 3.7 ADMINISTRATIVE FLOW OF TRANSFER REQUESTS
FOR AREA 1 MAGNET SCHOOLS
(1984-5 and 1985-6 school years)



There is roughly equal participation in the transfer activity by minority pupils (48 percent) and majority group pupils (52 percent).

An analysis of the destinations of the requests indicates that 53 percent were transfers within the magnet school cluster, 13 percent were out-bound from the cluster, and 33 percent were in-bound to the Area 1 magnet cluster. These proportions were generally similar for majority and minority group pupils. (e.g. for majority pupils 52 percent were within-cluster and 32 percent were in-bound, and for minority pupils 55 percent were within and 35 percent were in-bound.)

Racial Balance and the Transfer Process. The central question, for the magnet school concept to be viable in reducing racial imbalance, is the extent to which the voluntary pupil transfers contribute to racial balance in the schools. The foregoing discussion indicates that many transfers are not serving the racial balance goal. Thus, we categorized the transfer requests from the past three years involving the Area 1 magnet schools according to the requests potential effect on racial balance between the sending and receiving school. We defined three categories as follows:

- o Supportive of racial balance -- e.g. a majority pupil requests transfer to a school whose minority composition is more than two percentage points higher than the sending school, or a minority requests transfer to a school whose minority composition is more than two points lower than the sending school.
- o Neutral for racial balance -- e.g. the minority compositions of the sending and receiving schools lie within two percentage points of each other. Or, both the schools already lie within the 20 percent BOE guideline.
- o Counter to racial balance -- e.g. a minority pupil transfers to a higher minority school, or a majority pupil transfers to a lower minority school than the sending school.
- o For in-bound transfers the sending school's composition was ignored, as was the composition of the receiving school for out-bound requests. Only the effect on the magnet schools was considered.

With these categories, then, we judged both the potential effect of initial requests as they came "across the desk" from parents, and the effect on racial balance of the final administrative decision (both approvals and denials). The results are summarized in Table 3.3.

TABLE 3.3
Effects on School Racial Balance of Initial
Requests and Final Administrative Decisions.
(1,312 requests from 1983 through 1985)

Effect on Racial Balance	Initial Request	Final Decision
Supportive of:	37 %	40 %
Neutral to:	22 %	22 %
Counter to:	41 %	38 %

These data go a long way toward explaining the modest effects of voluntary transfers on school racial balance. First, as long as the number of requests submitted by parents which support racial balance are offset by a similar number which run counter to racial balance, the voluntary transfer policy will not, without some regulation process, contribute to racial balance.

Second, given the 86 percent approval rate cited above, the current administrative practices produce essentially an open market condition.

More detailed findings revealed that only 12 percent of the minority requests for within-cluster transfers supported racial balance while 58 percent of them ran counter to racial balance. Thus, minority pupil transfers within-cluster have very little leverage on the racial balance problem. Furthermore, 50 percent of the minority transfers in-bound to the cluster ran counter to the needs of racial balance. These figures are particularly meaningful since within-cluster and in-bound requests account for 89 percent of all minority requests, and out-bound minority transfers account for only 11 percent of the requests.

For majority pupils, 66 percent of the within-cluster requests supported racial balance, and these accounted for just over half of the majority transfer requests. Thus, within-cluster transfers for majority pupils have greater leverage on the racial balance situation. Also, for in-bound majority pupils about 63 percent had no effect on racial balance. Thus, many in-bound majority pupils are not going to the higher-minority schools in the cluster.

CHAPTER 4

MAGNET PROGRAMS IN AREA 2

This chapter presents the magnet programs in Area 2, and reviews the program implementation findings for the four magnet schools together with the statistical briefs on school racial balance and pupil transfer histories. We conclude this section with a summary of the findings for the Area 2 cluster as a whole.

The findings for Area 2 show a picture of a magnet program working in a setting more conducive to success than is true for Area 1. Program implementation levels are generally satisfactory with some improvements currently in planning for two of the schools. The average level of transfers is slightly lower than in Area 1, but parental response to the magnet schools produces a higher volume of transfers than in the nonmagnet schools of Area 2. The overall racial balance of the magnet cluster has improved over the last two years to a level which is under the BOE guideline. The racial balancing is due largely to a combination of favorable demographic trends noted in Chapter 2 together with a grade-pairing plan. Yet, the racial balancing effect of the magnet school transfers is strong enough to make the difference between noncompliance and compliance with the BOE guideline.

MAGNET SCHOOLS AND THEIR PROGRAMS

Information describing the four magnet school programs is summarized in Table 4.1 from the site visits. In 1983 as part of the current magnet plan, three schools (Chevy Chase, North Chevy Chase and Rosemary Hills) were linked in a grade-sharing network whereby Rosemary Hills would house kindergarten through second grade pupils from the other two schools, and pupils from the Rosemary Hills community would attend either of the other two schools from grades three through six. This plan was phased in gradually to full implementation by the Fall of 1985. Together with the grade-sharing plan, an expanded and redefined magnet program was installed in Rosemary Hills.

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TABLE 4.1
DESCRIPTION OF AREA 2 MAGNET SCHOOLS AND PROGRAMS

SCHOOL	GRADE LEVELS	PROGRAM FEATURES
Rosemary Hills	HS-2	A gifted and talented program combined with science, math, and computer instruction are the magnet features at Rosemary Hills. Full-day kindergarten is also offered.
Chevy Chase	3-6	This school offers a gifted and talented program together with specialized instruction in math, science, and computers. These magnet features are continued from Rosemary Hills.
North Chevy Chase	3-6	North Chevy Chase also offers a gifted and talented program, as well as science and computer instruction. Students are also given the opportunity to plan their own days in a combination of group instruction and independent study.
Rock Creek Forest	K-6	A Spanish Immersion Program for students in grades 1-6 is the magnet feature at Rock Creek Forest. Spanish instruction for students not in the magnet program and full-day kindergarten are also offered.

SCHOOL BY SCHOOL FINDINGS

The statistical summaries and commentaries appearing below are modeled after those for Area 1 in the foregoing chapter. Information in the commentaries was obtained from a series of site visits. For readers who may have skipped over the Area 1 material, an explanation of the data in the summaries is provided on page 3-5.

CHEVY CHASE

DESIGNATED MAGNET FEATURES: Mathematics/science/computer and gifted and talented program

MINORITY COMPOSITION AND SCHOOL UTILIZATION: 1974-1985

	1974	1981	1983	1985	% MINORITY CHANGE, 1981-1985	
PERCENT						
CHEVY CHASE	20.7%	39.8%	32.9%	34.1%	-5.7%	ESTIMATED EFFECT OF TRANSFERS ON 1985 MINORITY COMPOSITION
MAGNET AVERAGE	37.6%	43.5%	48.5%	48.4%	+4.9%	
INCPS AVERAGE	16.4%	23.8%	26.9%	30.1%	+6.3%	-2%
ENROLLMENT	450	327	431	312	////////////////	
UTILIZATION	78.9%	57.4%	79.8%	61.2%	////////////////	

TRANSFER AND PRIVATE SCHOOL ENTRIES AND WITHDRAWALS

		TRANSFERS INTO CHEVY CHASE			TRANSFERS OUT OF CHEVY CHASE		
		MINORITY	MAJORITY	TOTAL	MINORITY	MAJORITY	TOTAL
	# Requests	13	7	20	3	11	14
1983-84	% Approved	38%	86%	53%	67%	91%	86%
	(# Approved)	(5)	(6)	(11)	(2)	(10)	(12)
	# Private	--	--	17	--	--	21
	# Requests	11	15	26	1	2	3
1984-85	% Approved	64%	87%	77%	100%	100%	100%
	(# Approved)	(7)	(13)	(20)	(1)	(2)	(3)
	# Private	--	--	16	--	--	15
	# Requests	1	19	20	2	0	2
1985-86	% Approved	100%	84%	85%	50%	--	50%
	(# Approved)	(1)	(16)	(17)	(1)	--	(1)
	# Private	--	--	--	--	--	--
	# Requests	25	41	66	6	13	19
TOTAL	% Approved	52%	85%	73%	67%	92%	84%
	(# Approved)	(13)	(35)	(48)	(4)	(12)	(16)
	# Private*	--	--	33	--	--	36

*Data on private school entries and withdrawals are available for the 1983-84 and 1984-85 school years only. Race data are not available.

CHEVY CHASE

THE PROGRAM

The official magnet feature is a program emphasizing math, science and computers as well as a gifted/talented program as an extension of the magnet program at Rosemary Hills. The science program features a well-equipped lab staffed by a full-time science teacher. A "Mentor Program" features visiting scientists who share ideas and projects with students. The computer lab has 21 computers and is also staffed by a full-time teacher.

Chevy Chase also has a strong program in the arts, holding two national awards in the areas of art and English language arts. Pupils produce a weekly live video program in the school's TV studio. The school has a well-known 106-voice chorus, and instrumental music lessons are provided once per week. Art activities and clubs include folk dance, pottery, calligraphy, recorder, animated film effects and knitting. Before- and after-school child care is available at the school through a private provider.

MAGNET APPEAL

Sixty-six students requested to transfer into Chevy Chase from other Montgomery County schools in the last three years and 33 students entered the school from private schools during the 1983 and 1984 school years. Only 19 students requested to transfer out, although 36 students left in two years to attend private schools. Currently, almost 20 percent of the enrollment consists of students who live beyond the school's administrative boundaries.

For both minority and majority students, more requests to transfer in were approved than were requests to transfer out.

TRANSFER REQUESTS

Requests to leave Chevy Chase were somewhat more likely to be granted than requests to enter the school. Minority requests, both to enter and leave Chevy Chase, were less likely to be approved than requests from majority students. However, only 6 minority students requested to leave the school. The approval rate for transfer requests into the school increased over the three year period.

UTILIZATION

The utilization rate at Chevy Chase (61.2%) indicates that there is space for more students.

RACIAL BALANCE

The percentage of minority students at Chevy Chase has declined somewhat since 1981, from 39.8 percent to 34.1 percent. Chevy Chase is well within the Office of Civil Rights guidelines and has the lowest minority percentage of any of the four magnet schools in the Bethesda-Chevy Chase cluster. Pupil transfers have lowered the 1985 minority percentage to a small degree.

NORTH CHEVY CHASE

DESIGNATED MAGNET FEATURES: Mathematics/science/computer and gifted and talented magnet program

MINORITY COMPOSITION AND SCHOOL UTILIZATION: 1976-1985

		1976	1981	1983	1985	% MINORITY CHANGE, 1981-1985	ESTIMATED EFFECT OF TRANSFERS ON 1985 MINORITY COMPOSITION
PERCENT MINORITY	NORTH CHEVY CHASE	18.4%	27.8%	47.1%	51.8%	+24.8%	
	MAGNET AVERAGE	37.6%	43.5%	48.5%	48.4%	+4.9%	
	MCPS AVERAGE	16.4%	23.8%	26.9%	30.1%	+6.3%	
ENROLLMENT		320	273	280	276	////////////////////	
UTILIZATION		84.2%	71.8%	84.8%	92.8%	////////////////////	

TRANSFER AND PRIVATE SCHOOL ENTRIES AND WITHDRAWALS

		TRANSFERS INTO NORTH CHEVY CHASE			TRANSFERS OUT OF NORTH CHEVY CHASE		
		MINORITY	MAJORITY	TOTAL	MINORITY	MAJORITY	TOTAL
# Requests		12	19	31	15	24	39
1983-84	% Approved	100%	100%	100%	13%	75%	51%
	(# Approved)	(12)	(19)	(31)	(2)	(18)	(20)
	# Private	--	--	15	--	--	13
# Requests		5	5	10	10	7	17
1984-85	% Approved	100%	100%	100%	30%	86%	53%
	(# Approved)	(5)	(5)	(10)	(3)	(6)	(9)
	# Private	--	--	6	--	--	5
# Requests		5	6	11	5	7	12
1985-86	% Approved	60%	83%	73%	60%	100%	83%
	(# Approved)	(3)	(5)	(8)	(3)	(7)	(10)
	# Private	--	--	--	--	--	--
# Requests		22	30	52	30	38	68
TOTAL	% Approved	91%	97%	94%	26%	82%	57%
	(# Approved)	(20)	(29)	(49)	(8)	(31)	(39)
	# Private*	--	--	21	--	--	18

*Data on private school entries and withdrawals are available for the 1983-84 and 1984-85 school years only. Race data are not available.

NORTH CHEVY CHASE

THE PROGRAM

The designated magnet features at North Chevy Chase are the math, science, and gifted/talented programs in both academics and arts. Content area specialists teach math, science, music and the English Language Arts curriculum. Pupils have two hours per week of art, music and physical education compared to less than one hour in many other schools. The school's computer lab has 12 computers, seven of which are new this year. The math curriculum is reinforced with the CSMP math program.

North Chevy Chase has a strong program in the arts with an art studio, a school chorus, a "New Singers" group, and music instruction with the Orff-Kodaly method. Before- or after-school activities are offered in word processing, French language, science, and the computer club. For the past 12 years the school has also operated a program whereby pupils select their own class schedules for certain periods throughout the week, and attend skill centers where they work independently at their own projects. This program is currently under review by a task force of parents, school, and area office staff collaborating on a revised program.

MAGNET APPEAL

Fifty-two students requested to transfer into North Chevy Chase in the last three years. Slightly under 15 percent of the current student enrollment transferred into the school from other Montgomery County elementary schools. North Chevy Chase ranks third among the four magnet schools in Area 2 in terms of the proportion of its student body who transferred in from other MCPS schools. Twenty one students entered the school from private schools during 1983 and 1984.

On the other hand, 68 students requested to leave North Chevy Chase between 1983 and 1985 and 18 students withdrew to attend private schools in the two years for which data are available.

For minority students, more requests to transfer into North Chevy Chase were approved than requests to transfer out. A similar number of requests in and out of the school were approved for majority students.

TRANSFER REQUESTS

For both white and minority students, requests to transfer into North Chevy Chase were much more likely to be approved than were requests to leave the school. Only about a fourth of the minority requests to leave North Chevy Chase were approved. While the approval rate for requests into the school dropped in the three-year period, the approval rate for requests to leave the school increased.

UTILIZATION

The utilization rate at North Chevy Chase has increased steadily over the last three years from 71.8 percent in 1981 to 92 percent in 1985.

RACIAL BALANCE

The minority percentage at North Chevy Chase has increased from 27.8 percent in 1981 to 51.8 percent in 1985, largely as a result of the grade-pairing with Rosemary Hills. Yet, the current transfers serve to lower the 1985 minority enrollment five percentage points, as noted earlier on page 3-3.

ROCK CREEK FOREST

DESIGNATED MAGNET FEATURES: Spanish Immersion

MINORITY COMPOSITION AND SCHOOL UTILIZATION: 1976-1985

		1976	1981	1983	1985	% MINORITY CHANGE, 1981-1985	ESTIMATED EFFECT OF TRANSFERS ON 1985 MINORITY COMPOSITION
PERCENT MINORITY	ROCK CREEK FOREST	47.8%	48.3%	56.3%	57.5%	+9.2%	
	MAGNET AVERAGE	37.6%	43.5%	48.5%	48.4%	+4.9%	
	MCPS AVERAGE	16.4%	23.8%	26.9%	30.1%	+6.3%	
ENROLLMENT		230	302	284	293	////////////////////	
UTILIZATION		65.7%	86.3%	88.8%	101.0%	////////////////////	

TRANSFER AND PRIVATE SCHOOL ENTRIES AND WITHDRAWALS

		TRANSFERS INTO ROCK CREEK FOREST			TRANSFERS OUT OF ROCK CREEK FOREST		
		MINORITY	MAJORITY	TOTAL	MINORITY	MAJORITY	TOTAL
# Requests		23	31	54	9	4	13
1983-84	% Approved	43%	81%	65%	100%	100%	100%
	(# Approved)	(10)	(25)	(35)	(9)	(4)	(13)
	# Private	--	--	4	--	--	18
# Requests		24	16	40	2	7	9
1984-85	% Approved	96%	94%	95%	50%	100%	89%
	(# Approved)	(23)	(15)	(38)	(1)	(7)	(8)
	# Private	--	--	5	--	--	11
# Requests		22	12	34	4	4	8
1985-86	% Approved	68%	92%	76%	75%	50%	63%
	(# Approved)	(15)	(11)	(26)	(3)	(2)	(5)
	# Private	--	--	--	--	--	--
# Requests		69	59	128	15	15	30
TOTAL	% Approved	70%	86%	77%	87%	87%	87%
	(# Approved)	(48)	(51)	(99)	(13)	(13)	(26)
	# Private	--	--	9	--	--	29

*Data on private school entries and withdrawals are available for the 1983-84 and 1984-85 school years only. Race data are not available.

ROCK CREEK FOREST

THE PROGRAM

Although it did not become an officially designated magnet program until 1984-1985, the Spanish Immersion Program at Rock Creek Forest has existed since 1978. Probably as a result of designating an already existing program as a magnet, the program at Rock Creek has functioned without a curriculum coordinator and without some of the resources given to other magnet schools. In the fall of 1986, Rock Creek Forest will receive a half-time curriculum coordinator for the first time.

Like the French Immersion Program in Area 1, not all students at Rock Creek Forest participate in the Spanish Immersion Program. For the 1985-1986 school year, around 80 students in 4 different classes were in the program. Students not in the immersion program in kindergarten through grade 3 receive some daily Spanish instruction and students in grades 5 and 6 can receive instruction in Spanish if they so desire.

Rock Creek Forest also offers full-day kindergarten and prides itself on its emphasis on achievement for all students and its multi-cultural atmosphere.

MAGNET APPEAL

In the last three years, 128 students requested to transfer into Rock Creek Forest and nine students entered from private schools in 1983 and 1984. Furthermore, approximately a third of the present enrollment lives beyond the school's administrative boundaries, the highest percentage of any magnet school in Area 2.

Thirty students requested transfers out of Rock Creek Forest to other MCPS schools and 29 left to attend private schools during 1983 and 1984.

For both minority and majority students, more requests to transfer into the school were approved than requests to transfer out.

TRANSFER REQUESTS

Transfer requests both into and out of Rock Creek Forest were generally approved in the last three years. Seventy seven percent of the requests into the school and 87 percent of the requests to leave were approved. While there were no differences in the approval rates for white and minority students requesting to leave Rock Creek Forest, minority requests to enter the school were somewhat less likely to be approved than majority requests. The approval rate for requests to leave the school declined over the three year period.

UTILIZATION

Rock Creek Forest is over capacity this year, with 293 students in a school designed for 290 students. Two portables have been added to the school.

RACIAL BALANCE

The minority student enrollment at Rock Creek Forest has increased from 48.3 percent in 1981 to 57.5 percent in 1985. Despite this increase, transfers into and out of the school decreased the percentage of minority students by nine points.

The Spanish Immersion Program, however, essentially results in a "school within a school." For the 1985-1986 school year, 32 percent of the students in the immersion program were minorities compared to 78 percent of the students in the regular English program.

ROSEMARY HILLS

DESIGNATED MAGNET FEATURES: Mathematics/science/computer and gifted and talented program with a full-day kindergarten

MINORITY COMPOSITION AND SCHOOL UTILIZATION: 1976-1985

	1976	1981	1983	1985	% MINORITY CHANGE, 1981-1985	
ROSEMARY HILLS	64.3%	58.0%	57.4%	50.2%	-7.8%	ESTIMATED EFFECT OF TRANSFERS ON 1985 MINORITY COMPOSITION
PERCENT MINORITY						
MAGNET AVERAGE	37.6%	43.5%	48.5%	48.4%	+4.9%	
MCPS AVERAGE	16.4%	23.8%	26.9%	30.1%	+6.3%	-5%
ENROLLMENT	387	387	216	482	////////////////////	
UTILIZATION	74.4%	59.8%	53.5%	125.2%	////////////////////	

TRANSFER AND PRIVATE SCHOOL ENTRIES AND WITHDRAWALS

		TRANSFERS INTO ROSEMARY HILLS			ROSEMARY HILLS		
		MINORITY	MAJORITY	TOTAL	MINORITY	MAJORITY	TOTAL
1983-84	# Requests	14	14	28	24	14	38
	% Approved	100%	100%	100%	38%	14%	29%
	(# Approved)	(14)	(14)	(28)	(9)	(2)	(11)
	# Private	--	--	7	--	--	12
1984-85	# Requests	11	41	52	15	17	32
	% Approved	73%	95%	90%	93%	82%	88%
	(# Approved)	(8)	(39)	(47)	(14)	(14)	(28)
	# Private	--	--	14	--	--	12
1985-86	# Requests	6	25	31	8	15	23
	% Approved	83%	92%	90%	50%	53%	52%
	(# Approved)	(5)	(23)	(28)	(4)	(8)	(12)
	# Private	--	--	--	--	--	--
TOTAL	# Requests	31	80	111	47	46	93
	% Approved	87%	95%	93%	57%	52%	55%
	(# Approved)	(27)	(76)	(103)	(27)	(24)	(51)
	# Private	--	--	21	--	--	24

*Data on private school entries and withdrawals are available for the 1983-84 and 1984-85 school years only. Race data are not available.

ROSEMARY HILLS

THE PROGRAM

As part of a three-school grade-sharing network, Rosemary Hills shares with Chevy Chase and North Chevy Chase its magnet program features of math, science and computer emphasis and gifted/talented classes. In addition, class sizes for this school are mandated not to exceed 20 pupils in kindergarten or 25 in the other grades. The computer lab, attended once a week, currently has 17 computers, but the staff feel that 30 computers are needed to fully implement the program. The math curriculum is reinforced with a problem-solving approach from the CSMP math program, and the science program includes studies in life and physical sciences.

Rosemary Hills is a full-service community school open typically from 7:00 A.M. to 11:00 P.M. The all-day kindergarten staff of nine teachers is as large as a typical junior high school department. There are after-school programs, and transportation is provided to and from five day care centers. Adult programs often occupy the evening hours.

Rosemary Hills has a long history of bringing neighborhoods together. It was the first school in MCPS built to racially balance neighborhoods. Since 1976 it has been paired with the Larchmont, Parkwood, Chevy Chase and North Chevy Chase areas. The current grade-pairing scheme, phased in over the last three years, was fully implemented in the 1985-86 school year.

MAGNET APPEAL

In the last three years, 111 students requested to transfer into Rosemary Hills. Another 21 entered from private schools during 1983 and 1984. Despite the relatively large number of requests to transfer into Rosemary Hills and the high approval rate, only 13 percent of the present student body transferred into the school. This is the lowest rate for any of the four magnet schools in Area 2.

Ninety-three requests to leave Rosemary Hills were received and 24 students left the school to attend private schools in 1983 and 1984.

While the same number of minority requests were approved to enter and leave the school, many more requests from majority students to enter Rosemary Hills were approved than requests to leave.

TRANSFER REQUESTS

Requests to transfer into Rosemary Hills were much more likely to be approved than requests to leave. This was the case for both majority and minority students. Little difference occurred in the approval of requests for white and minority students. Approvals for requests to leave dropped dramatically in the last two years.

UTILIZATION

The sharp increase in enrollment at Rosemary Hills resulted in a utilization rate of 124.2 percent.

RACIAL BALANCE

The minority composition at Rosemary Hills declined from a high of 57.4 percent in 1983 to 50.4 percent in 1985, largely as a result of its pairing with North Chevy Chase. For the first time in many years, Rosemary Hills is hovering at the BOE guideline for minority enrollment. The 1985 minority percentage is five points lower than it would be without transfers in and out of the school.

SUMMARY OF IMPLEMENTATION FINDINGS

THE MAGNET PROGRAMS IN AREA 2 ARE GENERALLY STAFFED, EQUIPPED AND OPERATIONAL IN THE SCHOOLS. PUPIL-STAFF RATIOS ARE BETTER IN THE MAGNET THAN NONMAGNET SCHOOLS. MAGNET SCHOOLS ARE STIMULATING MORE TRANSFER ACTIVITY THAN NONMAGNET SCHOOLS. TWO SCHOOLS NEED FULLER PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT.

Many of the conditions found in the Area 1 schools during the planning phase also impinged on the magnet program implementation for the Area 2 cluster. For example, North Chevy Chase was closed during 1981, then reopened in 1982. The grade-pairing plan for North Chevy Chase, Chevy Chase and Rosemary Hills was phased in over a three-year period, and became complete only in the Fall of 1985. The long-standing Spanish language instruction program at Rock Creek Forest was designated as a magnet feature, but new features were added to the programs of the other three schools. The effects of these changes on program implementation by the Fall of 1985 are summarized in Table 4.2.

TABLE 4.2
IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF AREA 2 MAGNET PROGRAM FEATURES

SCHOOL	STAFF	SPACE	EQUIPMENT	ORGANIZATION	SUMMARY
Chevy Chase	2	2	2	2	100 %
North Chevy Chase	2	2	2	1	75 %
Rock Creek Forest	1	1	2	2	50 %
Rosemary Hills	2	1	1	2	50 %

SCALE: 1=Needs further development
2=Satisfactory implementation

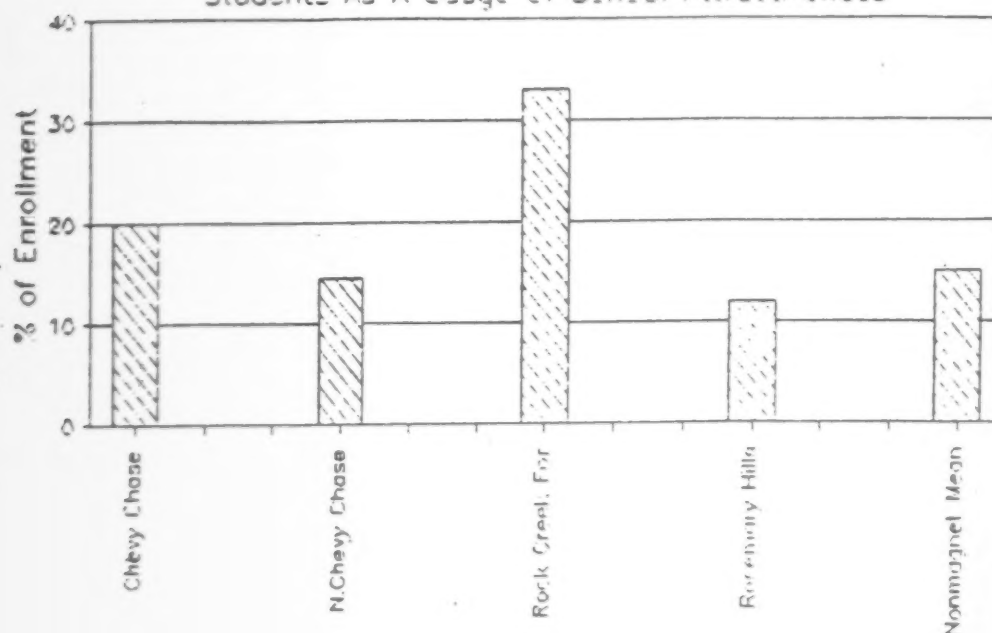
Levels of staffing in the magnet cluster are generally more favorable than found in the Area 2 nonmagnet schools. For the 1985 school year the cluster average pupil-teacher ratio was 21.5 and the pupil-aide ratio was 44.5 while in the nonmagnet schools those ratios were, respectively, 25.0 and 100.6. Rock Creek Forest is the only school in this cluster without a curriculum coordinator.

Three of the four schools are operating above the optimal utilization rate, and that index exceeds 100 percent in two of the schools. Current plans for expansion at Rosemary Hills should facilitate their program implementation.

SCHOOL APPEAL

As was found in Area 1, parents are responding to the magnet schools with a higher volume of transfers than found in the nonmagnet schools. While the average in-transfer rate for the Area 2 nonmagnets is 15 percent (five points higher than the Area 1 nonmagnets), the Area 2 magnet school in-transfer rate averaged 20 percent. The proportion of school enrollments which are in-transfers is shown in Figure 4.1 for the Area 2 magnet schools.

Fig. 4.1 Percentage of In-Transfer
Students As A Gauge of School Attractiveness



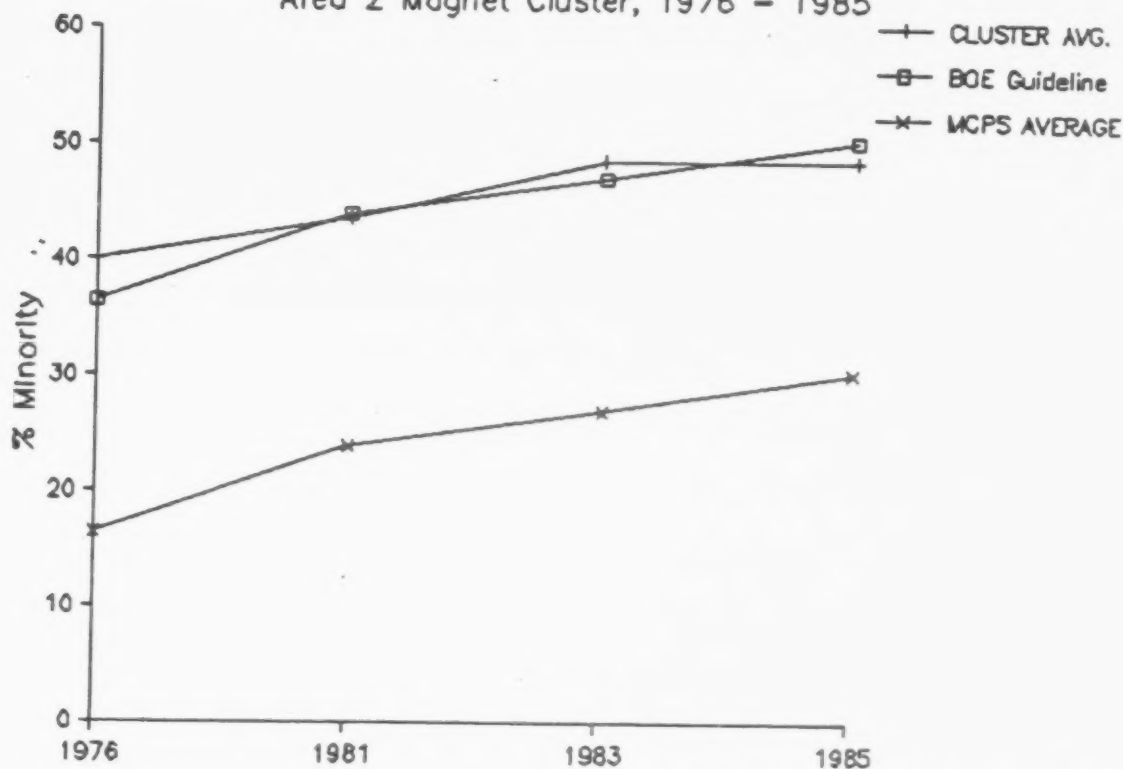
As noted in the Chapter 3 discussion of Area 1, child care is a popular reason for transfer requests, after school programs. Parents cited child care as a reason for transferring into a magnet school about 20 percent of the time, and they cited school programs on about 29 percent of the requests. For transfers out-bound from the cluster, child care was cited about 39 percent of the time. Thus, some potential magnet school drawing power may be lost for lack of fuller child care services.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS ON RACIAL BALANCE IN AREA 2

THE RACIAL BALANCE OF THE AREA 2 CLUSTER HAS IMPROVED SLIGHTLY OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS. THE MINORITY COMPOSITION OF THE CLUSTER NOW LIES WITHIN THE OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS GUIDELINE.

The minority composition of the four-school magnet cluster in Area 2 has increased more slowly over the last four years than has the MCPS average, as portrayed below in Figure 4.2. By the Fall of 1985 the cluster average was 48.3 percent minority, or 18.3 points above the MCPS average minority composition.

Fig. 4.2 Minority Composition of Area 2 Magnet Cluster, 1976 - 1985

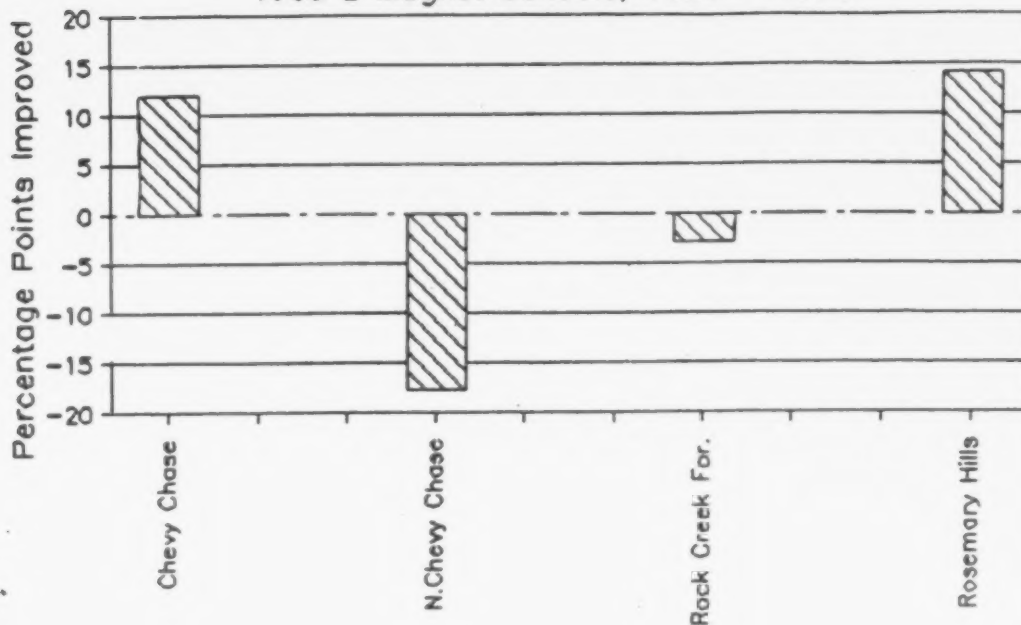


The three-school grade sharing network established in 1983 between Chevy Chase, North Chevy Chase and Rosemary Hills has drawn down the minority composition of Rosemary Hills and pulled up the minority composition of North Chevy Chase. This effect is apparent in Figure 4.3 below. Chevy Chase had been paired with Rosemary Hills prior to 1981 so the same effect was not seen between those two schools. The racial balance in Rock Creek Forest remained within three percentage points of its 1981 level.

Now that the grade-pairing scheme is fully implemented, further improvements to racial balance in Rosemary Hills and North Chevy Chase are likely to come largely from voluntary transfers. We will see below how much their current

transfers are helping racial balance in those schools.

Fig. 4.3 Racial Balance Changes of
Area 2 Magnet Schools, 1981 - 1985

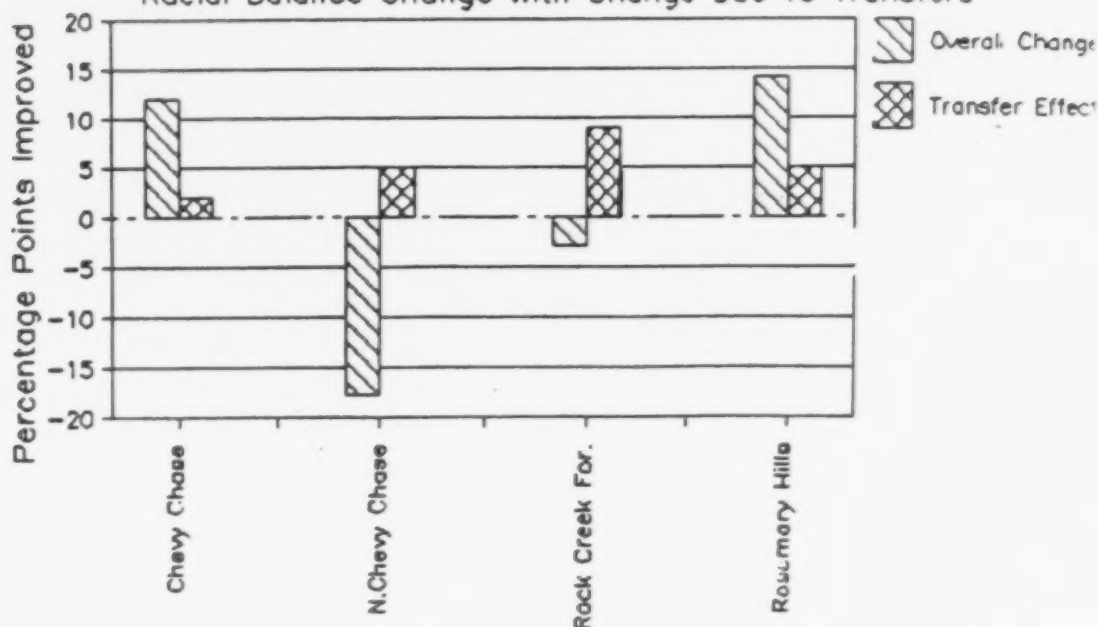


Effects of Pupil Transfers on Racial Balance

PUPIL TRANSFERS HAD A SMALL BUT POSITIVE EFFECT ON THE RACIAL BALANCE OF THE MAGNET SCHOOLS. SCHOOL ASSIGNMENT POLICIES AND DEMOGRAPHIC FORCES PRODUCE STRONGER EFFECTS ON SCHOOL RACIAL BALANCE THAN DO VOLUNTARY TRANSFERS.

In Figure 4.4 the overall racial balance change from 1981 to 1985 is displayed alongside the effects of all pupil transfers on racial balance. All four schools show some racial balance improvement due to transfers. In fact, the margin of improvement due to transfers in the Area 2 cluster is just large enough to draw the cluster average (noted in Figure 4.2) within compliance of the BOE 20-point guideline.

Fig. 4.4 Comparison of Overall
Racial Balance Change With Change Due To Transfers



On the other hand, as noted for Area 1 in Chapter 3, racial balance improvements due to transfers do not always translate into overall racial balance improvements for the school. For Chevy Chase and Rosemary Hills, the transfer effects are a small part of the overall racial balance improvement. For North Chevy Chase, the minority composition is five points lower than it would be without its transfers. But these transfers are not enough to offset the increase in racial imbalance due to the grade-pairing plan with Rosemary Hills.

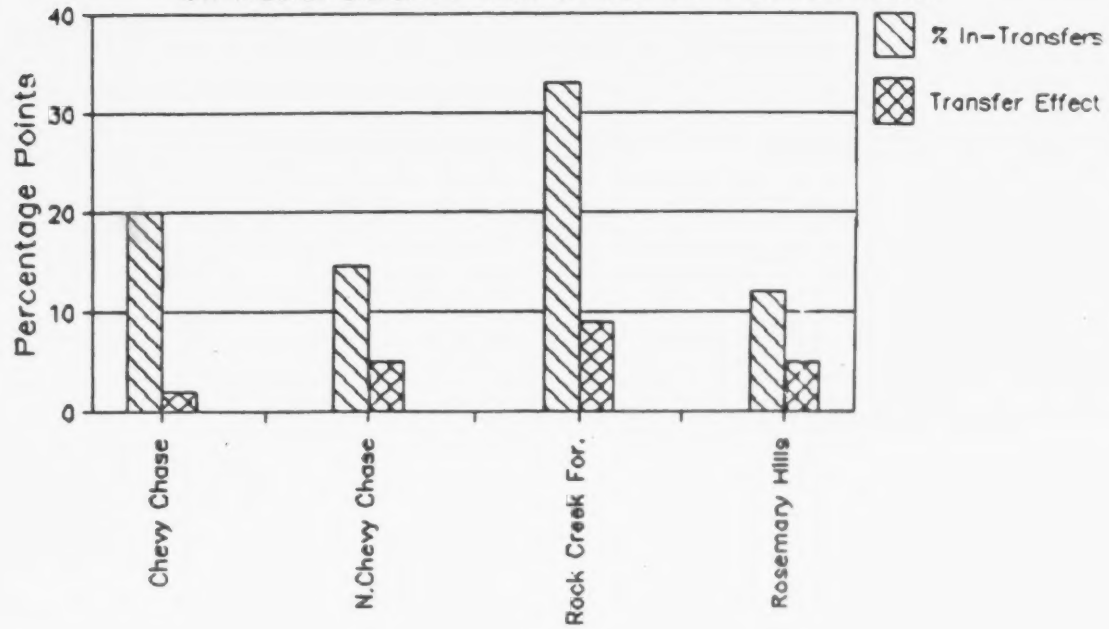
Would a greater volume of pupil transfers help racial balance in the schools?

In Figure 4.5 the strength of the transfer effect on racial balance is portrayed alongside the schools' rate of in-transfers (taken from Figure 4.1). Here again, as found in Area 1, the school with the highest in-transfer rate also had the strongest transfer effect on racial balance. But this was also the school with a slight increase in racial imbalance. Across Areas 1 and 2, the only three schools to register a positive racial balance effect from transfers in excess of five percentage points were the three schools which had in-transfer rates in excess of 30 percent.

Thus, many transfers in the schools are not contributing to racial balance, and where they do contribute their effect is relatively small.

Once again we turn to the transfer request process in order to understand how these effects come about.

Fig. 4.5 Comparison of Transfer Effect
On Racial Balance With School In-Transfer Rate.

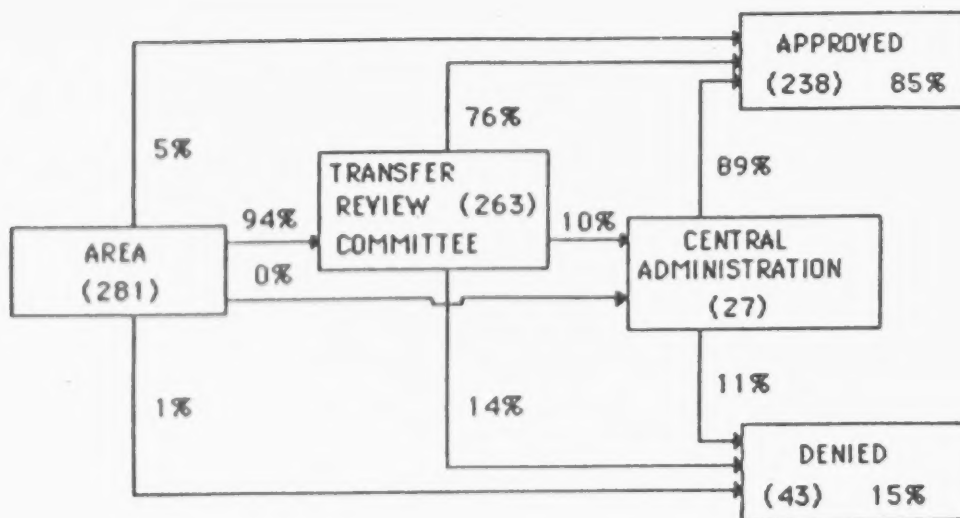


THE TRANSFER REQUEST PROCESS AND RACIAL BALANCE

THE VOLUNTARY TRANSFER PROCESS PRODUCES SOME LEVERAGE ON SCHOOL RACIAL BALANCE. HOWEVER, MANY TRANSFERS SUPPORTING RACIAL BALANCE ARE OFFSET BY OTHERS RUNNING COUNTER TO RACIAL BALANCE.

The Transfer Request Process. The general procedures for transfer requests were described above in Chapter 3. The flow of transfer requests involving the Area 2 magnet schools for the 1984-5 and 1985-6 school years is summarized in Figure 4.6. Parents submitted 281 transfer requests through the Area Office for transfers into, out from or within the four-school magnet cluster, and 94 percent of these were forwarded to the Transfer Review Committee. The Transfer Review Committee approved 76 percent of the requests, denied 14 percent which were not appealed, and denied another 10 percent which were subsequently appealed to Central Administration. The Central Administration approved 89 percent of the appeals, and denied 11 percent. In the end, 85 percent of the transfer requests were approved and 15 percent denied, a finding similar to that for Area 1.

Fig. 4.6. ADMINISTRATIVE FLOW OF TRANSFER REQUESTS
FOR AREA 2 MAGNET SCHOOLS
(1984-5 AND 1985-6 school years)



Majority and minority participation in the transfer process was roughly similar. Those requesting transfers were 42 percent minority while the enrollments in the cluster were 48 percent minority.

In examining the direction of the transfers (within, into, or out from the cluster), we found a difference from Area 1 which explains in part the low but generally positive effects of transfers on racial balance in Area 2. For Area 2, 55 percent of the transfers were in-bound and only 20 percent were within cluster, while for Area 1 these proportions were generally reversed. That is, Area 2 experienced a relatively greater influx of majority group pupils as is appropriate to the need for racial balance.

Racial Balance and the Transfer Process. The level of pupil transfers stimulated by the magnet schools indicates parental interest and participation in quality educational programs. However, the data in Figure 4.5 above indicate that the transfer request process, in its current form, has relatively modest effects on racial balance. As discussed in the Area 1 summary (p. 3-37), we categorized each transfer request according to its potential effect on racial balance between the sending and receiving schools, taking into account the minority/majority status of the pupils and the minority compositions of the schools involved. The results are summarized below in Table 4.3.

For every four requests which contribute to racial balance there are three running counter to racial balance between the sending and receiving schools. This ratio produces a small but positive impetus to racial balance for the cluster as a whole. The most efficient racial balancing effect comes from in-bound majority group transfers. For example, the in-bound transfers account for over half of the requests, and a detailed analysis of this group revealed that 66 percent of the decisions on majority pupils supported racial balance. On the other hand, in-bound minority group transfers are inefficient for racial balance in the cluster. For example, 54 percent of the minority in-bound requests ran counter to racial balance needs and only 16 percent of the decisions regarding minority requests supported racial balance.

TABLE 4.3
Effects on School Racial Balance of Initial
Requests and Final Administrative Decisions.
(474 requests from 1983 through 1985)

Effect on Racial Balance	Initial Request	Final Decision
Supportive of:	41 %	42 %
Neutral to:	28 %	28 %
Counter to:	31 %	30 %

Thus, while the voluntary transfer process works better toward racial balance in Area 2 than in Area 1, by virtue of the greater proportion of in-bound transfers, it will continue to yield only small racial balance changes as currently regulated.

CHAPTER 5

ALTERNATIVE STRATEGIES FOR MAGNET SCHOOL PLANNING

The findings in this report reveal several accomplishments in the magnet school clusters of Area 1 and Area 2. First, the "second generation" magnet school programs planned in 1983 have, with a few exceptions, generally been implemented in the schools.

Second, parents have actively participated in the magnet school programs with a greater volume of transfer requests than found in the nonmagnet schools. Three of the fourteen magnet schools have in-transfer rates in excess of 30 percent of their enrollments, and the in-transfer rate for magnet schools as a whole (23 percent) averages almost twice as much as the nonmagnet schools' average (12 percent).

Third, the racial balance of the magnet clusters has stabilized in recent years, while prior to 1981 the two clusters were farther from the school district's overall minority composition. The racial balance of the Area 2 cluster has dropped to within the BOE guideline. Several factors contributed to this stability including community demographic trends, school reassignment policies and the magnet school attractions.

However, the Area 1 level of racial balance, while stable, remains 31 percentage points above the MCPS overall minority composition, which is in excess of the BOE guideline. Also, the voluntary transfer process, while providing widespread participation in quality programs, has not had a major effect on the racial balance of the Area 1 cluster, because gains in racial balance in some schools have been offset by losses in racial balance in other schools.

Drawing upon these findings, on the detailed analysis of the transfer request process, and on the general demographic trends in the community, we discuss below several alternative strategies for enhancing the magnet program's leverage on racial balance improvements, and provide a brief commentary on the benefits and liabilities associated with each alternative. The scope of these strategies is confined to the current set of magnet schools, and does not explore potential school additions or deletions from the magnet clusters, or alternative cluster designs.

STRATEGY 1: CONTINUE AS IS, WORKING TOWARD FULL PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION.

Description: Continue support of existing programs in the current schools with special attention given to schools in which the programs are not fully implemented.

Enabling Conditions: None beyond what is now planned or already being done.

Advantages: Recent demographic trends indicate a slowdown in the rate of minority composition increases. In this context, the full implementation of the current plan may produce more positive racial balancing effects.

Also, only minimal increases in costs will be needed to ensure full magnet program implementation; and, "no more change" in school programs and school attendance patterns for the near future will contribute to staff and parent satisfaction.

Disadvantages: The main disadvantage to this alternative is that racial balance improvements are likely to be slower than may be expected from other options. With the current transfer policy unchanged, the new transfers which help racial balance are likely to be neutralized by other transfers detrimental to racial balance.

STRATEGY 2:

MAINTAIN PROGRAMS AND ENFORCE TRANSFER REGULATIONS MORE STRICTLY.

Description:

Operate the same magnet programs and continue moving toward full implementation, but significantly reduce the number of transfer approvals which do not promote racial balance. Thus, under this alternative school racial balance would be given a higher priority in the transfer regulation procedures. The current MCPS policy on pupil transfers identifies three conditions to be considered for transfer requests: school overcrowding; school underutilization; racial and socioeconomic balance. And, the parent information brochure on transfers notes these conditions. However, the findings in this report indicate that about 39 percent of the administrative decisions on magnet school transfers run counter to the need for racial balance.

Enabling Conditions:

None beyond current conditions, except more strict application of MCPS Regulation JEE-RA.

Advantages:

The major advantage to this approach, as with alternative (1), is that no additional resources are needed except for those required to produce full program implementation, and stability of school programs and school attendance zones should contribute to staff and parent satisfaction. However, with increased scrutiny of transfers, the movement toward better racial balance should accelerate significantly.

Disadvantages:

As more and more transfer requests are denied, more appeals, together with the associated administrative procedures, are likely. It is also possible that, given the need for majority group transfers to achieve racial balance, minority group parents may object to a potential lack of access to the magnet programs. If too many transfers are denied for these reasons, then the number of transfer requests may decline.

STRATEGY 3: CONTINUE TO REVISE THE MAGNET PROGRAMS IN SCHOOLS WITH LOW DRAWING POWER TO DATE.

Description: In the magnet schools which have not been able to attract significant numbers of transfers of the desired race groups, consider adding program features with proven drawing power (such as daycare) or replacing the present programs with those which have demonstrated appeal.

Enabling Conditions: Funds for new program starts.

Advantages: This option promotes free choice on the part of parents, makes attractive programs available to a wider range of students, and optimizes the drawing power of the programs in the present schools.

Disadvantages: This option requires additional costs for planning and startup of new programs, and a likely delay of two to three years for full program implementation. Also, existing school programs are disrupted, and some programs may be cut short before their full drawing power has been established.

- STRATEGY 4: EXPAND CURRENT RECRUITMENT EFFORTS AIMED AT ATTRACTING NONCLUSTER MAJORITY STUDENTS TO THE PRESENT MAGNET SCHOOLS.
- Description: Majority group in-transfers from noncluster schools represent a large potential pool of students needed to improve the racial balance of the schools. To increase the majority group transfer rate into the cluster, recruit them more aggressively, and make minor accommodations should they be required.
- Enabling Conditions: Since many of the high minority schools also have high utilization rates, it may be necessary for the currently planned expansions of certain schools to be completed before this alternative can be widely used. Funds for transportation will also have to be provided from the noncluster school areas.
- Advantages: This option minimizes negative reactions and appeals from denied transfer requests. Also, participation in quality programs is increased. The majority group movement from low minority to high minority schools improves the racial balance of both types of schools.
- Disadvantages: This option requires increased transportation costs.*; In addition, some schools near to the cluster, which are the most readily available source of majority group pupils, may experience racial imbalance from the majority group out-transfers. Also, some small schools may experience more underutilization as majority group pupils transfer into the magnet schools.

Each of the foregoing strategies has potential for improving the racial balance in Area 1. While some of these options are new, others are extensions or expansions of existing practices. They vary in their costs, their potential for racial balancing, their potential reactivity with the community and the speed with which they can be expected to produce effects. These strategies need not be considered in isolation. Rather, some combination of these options or others not yet envisioned may produce the most suitable programs for enhancing racial balance in the schools.